A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION
No.8 DECEMBER 1985
95p

ZZAP! 64

MONTHLY REVIEW FOR COMMODORE SOFTWARE



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Contributing Writer **John Minson**
Client Liaison **John Edwards**
Subscriptions **Denise Roberts**
Mail Order **Carol Kinsey**

Editorial and production:
1/2 King Street, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1AQ
☎ 0584 5851
Mail order and subscriptions
PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB
☎ 0585 5620

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ZZAP! 64

ISSUE No.8 DECEMBER 1985



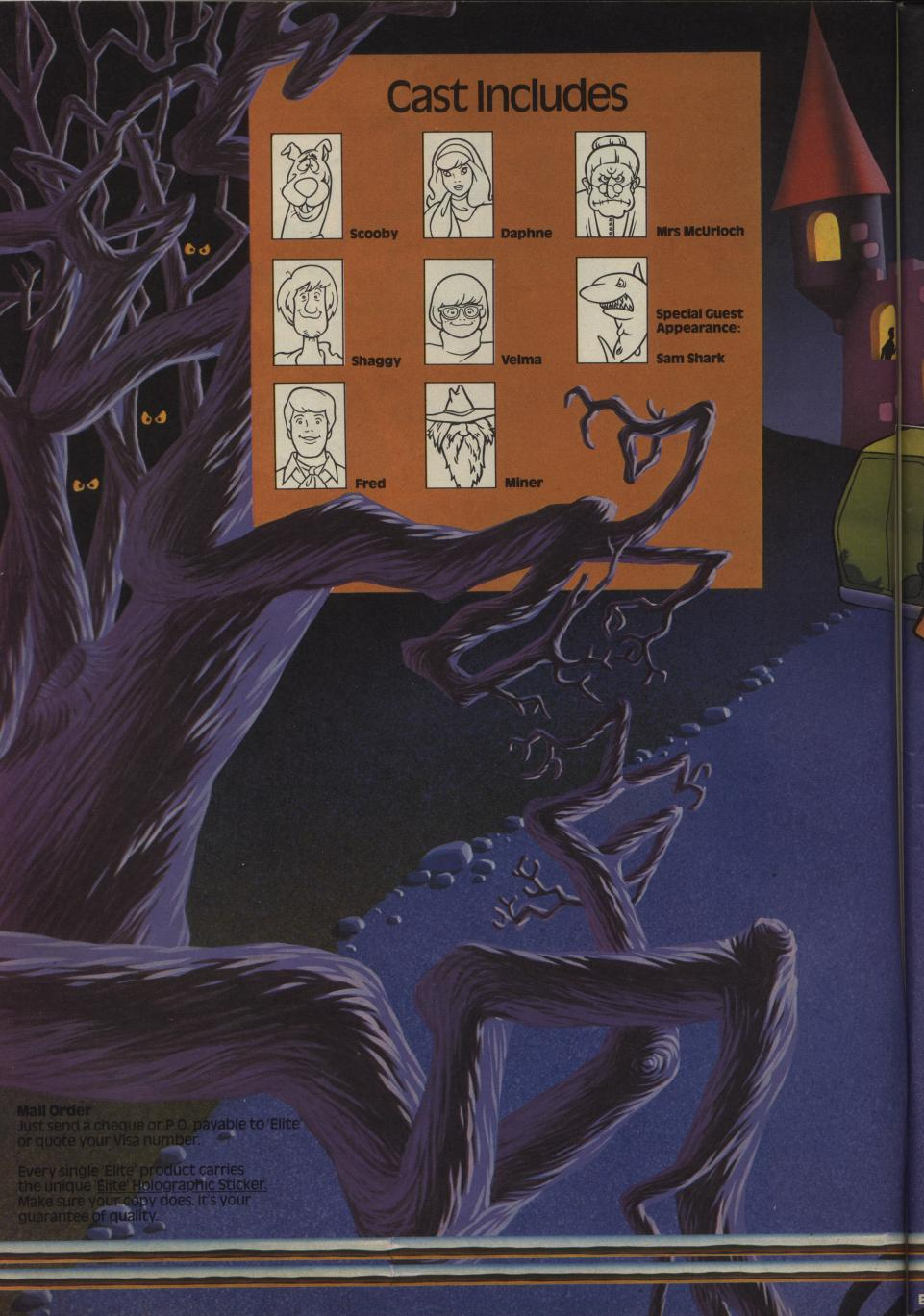
HOT GAMES FOR DECEMBER

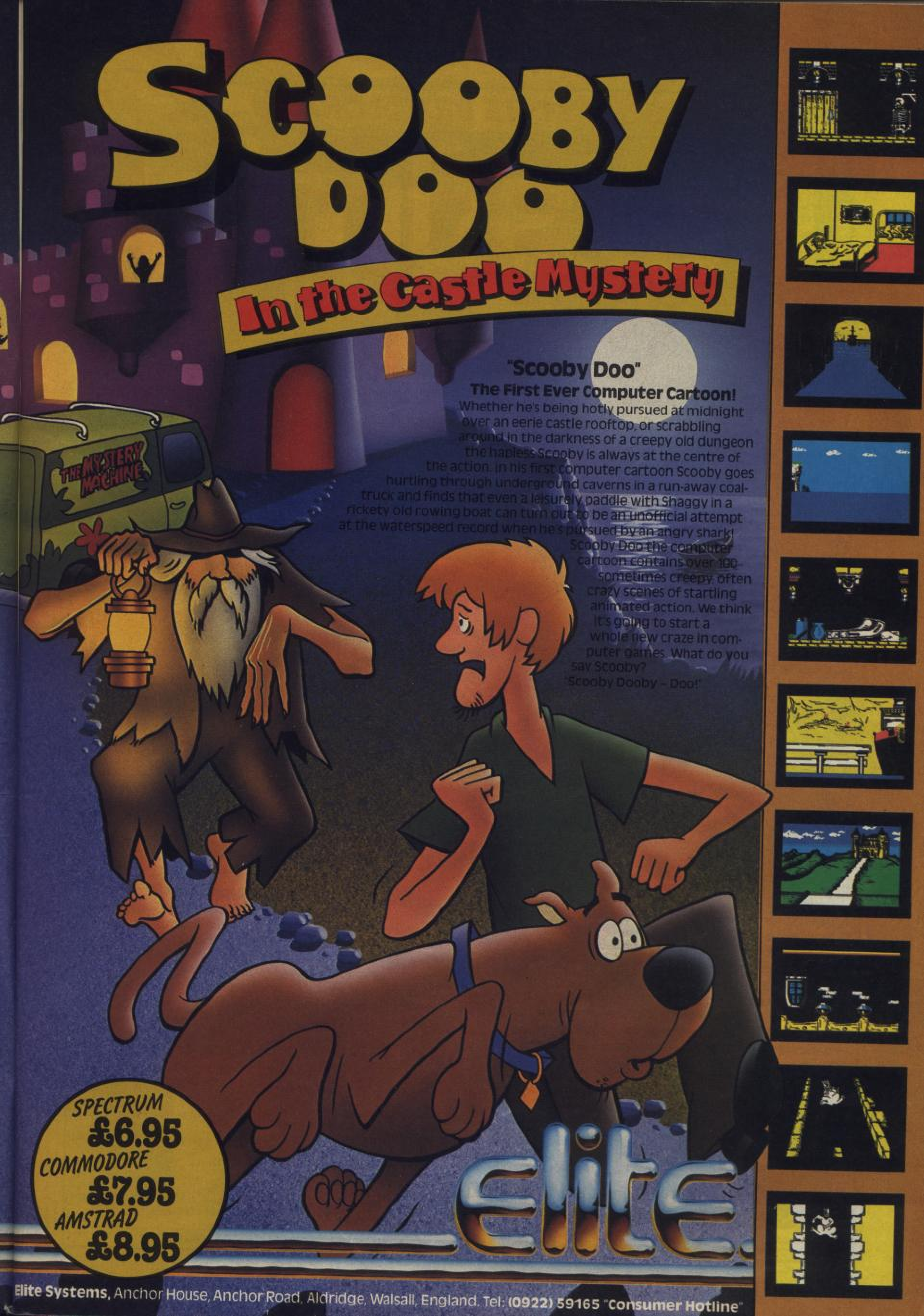
ZZAP SECTIONS

DECEMBER FEATURES

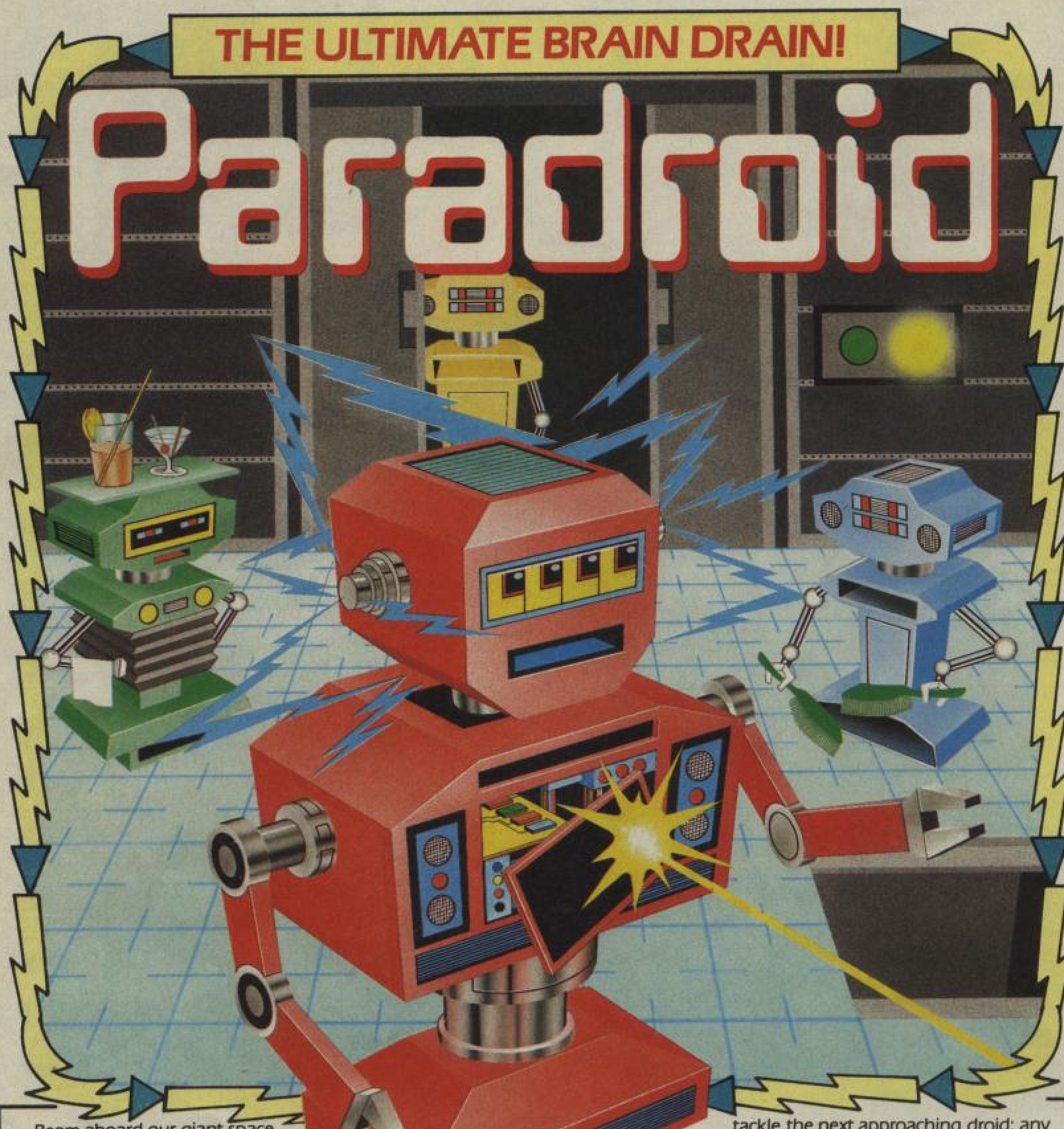
ZZAP PRIZE COMPETITIONS

The next issue of ZZAP! goes on sale on December 12, and is our Christmas Special which will cost slightly more at £1.25 (you'll see why). Don't miss it!


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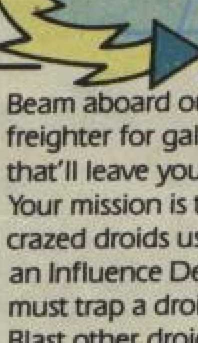


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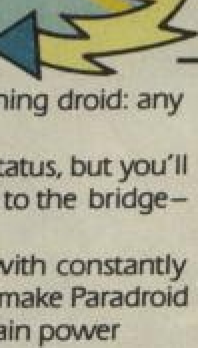
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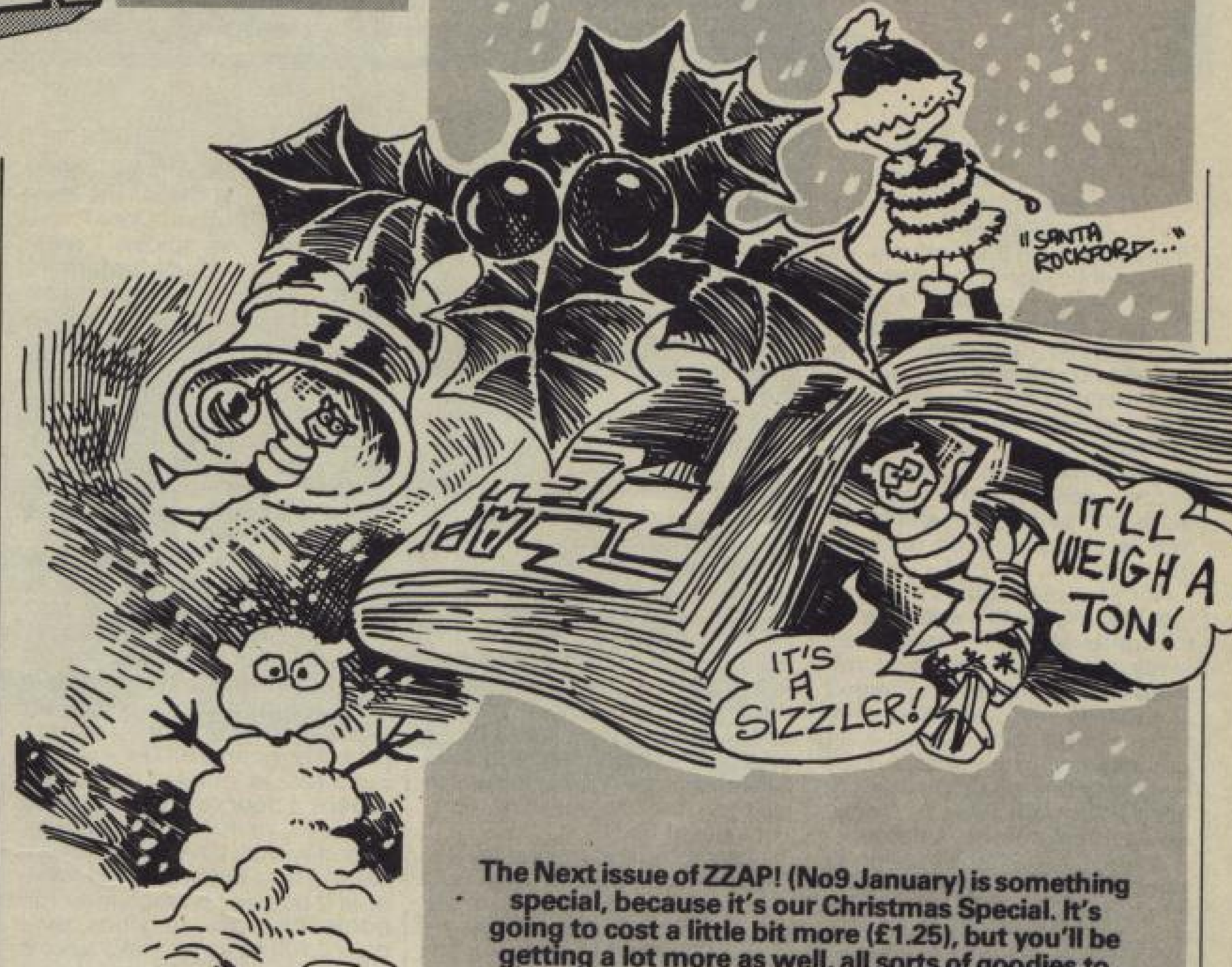
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ZZAP! ED

ZZAP! CHRISTMAS SPECIAL EDITION



IS THE GOOSE GETTING FAT?

Here we are once again, on the eve of Christmas, traditionally a season of good will, feasting, contemplation and extraordinary spending . . .

It's the big spend that most commercial organisations have their eyes on, the few weeks of the year when the software and hardware business makes or breaks for the forthcoming fiscal period. Last year, the predictions were that it would be a Commodore Christmas, and most companies spent the biggest slab of their budgets advertising games for the 64. The pundits were wrong — once again it was a Sinclair Christmas and it left software houses floundering with unshifted 64 stock and poor balance sheets from lack of Sinclair games to sell. This year, the pundits seem to reckon on it being an Amstrad Christmas because that machine's in a good, strong position, Sinclair isn't, and Commodore don't honestly seem to know what they're doing. Software house reaction seems to back this up too, with only a conservative volume of Spectrum games planned, plenty of Amstrad, and a disappointing release schedule for the 64.

No one wants to be caught out again this Christmas with surplus 64 stock — well no one wants to be caught with ANY surplus stock really. But it will be a shame if there aren't a reasonable selection of games available over the period because the industry is afraid of its own shadow and listens to the pundits proclaiming. Marketing apart, any good product will do well. It's too easy to sit back and say, 'it wasn't a Commodore Christmas,' when a game does poorly, without first examining whether the game failed because of its own qualities. At ZZAP! we all feel that, quite simply, the software business should look to its own strengths and take its own counsel about what kind of Christmas to expect, and to recognise that good software is what makes the difference, not quantity by itself.

Roger Kean

The Next issue of ZZAP! (No9 January) is something special, because it's our Christmas Special. It's going to cost a little bit more (£1.25), but you'll be getting a lot more as well, all sorts of goodies to while away those deadly post turkey and all the trimmings hours watching The Sound of Music for the tenth time. There's a . . .

- **Pull out Calendar with surprise features**
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- **The 1985 ZZAP! Readers awards — your chance to vote!**
- **And of course there's all the usual bits and pieces to keep you going until 1986 — and beyond.**

The ZZAP! Christmas Special Edition will be on sale from December 12 priced £1.25 at all good newsagents. Subscribers get theirs as normal — and that's a good deal, huh?

GAMES REVIEWED IN THIS ISSUE

ADVERTISERS INDEX

SCARABAEUS

Ariolasoft, £9.95 cass, £12.95 disk, Joystick or keys

My quest to find Scarabaeus, the fabulous emerald of the Pharaoh, began disastrously. As I entered the tomb a venomous spider bit me and now its slow terminal effect is beginning to bear heavily upon me. I know that the Tomb contains medicines that can cure me, but there are also poisons which are far deadlier than that of the spider's. At least I have the ancient scriptures to help me work out which are which but mostly I must rely on my own instincts.

At this present time I'm standing just inside the entrance of the tomb. My heartbeat echoes eerily in the emptiness of my surroundings and the ragged sounds of my breathing only make me feel uneasy. It's a bit like standing in a maze of giant hedges, although this is a far cry from Hampton Court. Everywhere I walk there are passageways leading left and right, some long, others leading to dead ends. Thankfully I have with me a map of the tomb to show me me where I am, otherwise life would be very difficult. I also have with me my health gauge which shows how near to death I am and a heart register so I know when I'm pushing myself to exhaustion. I'm ready to go now . . . I sit and ponder upon the old scriptures. I know what I have to do but I wonder if I am capable of doing it.

On the first level I find the ghosts of the tomb. I know from my readings that they will not kill me if I touch them — instead they give me a hieroglyph, nine of which fill a key. Once the key has been completed I can examine it and take note of the position of all the hieroglyphs. This should allow me to distinguish between medicines and poisons on the second level.

Getting to the second level is by no means easy. A hand operated lift takes me there — the trouble with the lift is that perfect rhythm is needed to make the lift go up or down. One slip as the stick is turned clockwise or anti-clockwise and the lift falls a level giving a terrible jolt which isn't too good for me in my current state of health.

I know that the second level is much the same as the first, only differing in the colour of the walls and in its size. I study my map carefully. Marked on it are the places of information — these, if used correctly, should give me potions and traps for use in the final and very dangerous third level. Each place of information has a giant spider guardian which chases me once I've opened its door. Once I have lured away the spider, I must return to the place of information to retrieve the useful items. Losing the spider proves no difficult task, but using the key to work out whether I should take the zombie trap and whether the potion is poisonous or not before the guardian catches up with me again, isn't so easy. In one of the places is the key to the Pharaoh's tomb on level three. This is in the form of a slide puzzle which I have move around to form the shape of the key before it can act correctly.

When I reach the final level, horrors yet unseen try to thwart my progress. On this level are more information recesses, although this time they are not properly guarded. On examining a recess, ancient machinery causes a door to smoothly slide upwards, revealing a shelf contained within. On this shelf there should be a bottle of antidote — or is it poison? If I recognise the bottle from the previous level then it will be safe to take since it must be the antidote. If I've never seen the bottle then it must be poison and should left well alone. On examining a place of information a zombie is activated and they chase after anything with living blood in its body . . . I must be very careful yet swift. The zombie traps come in useful here and could well save my skin more than once — I'm glad I made sure I picked up all four on level two.

When all the antidotes have been recovered I can make my way towards the Pharaoh's tomb which is located in the centre of the maze to complete the final task. Examining one of its eight entrances will give me a fiendish puzzle of the sort only the diabolical Pharaoh could have thought up — forty moves to rearrange the hieroglyphs



This is a really superb aardvark variant with the most realistic and gripping atmosphere I've ever encountered. The music is superb . . . but toggling to sound effects give some of the best and most apt sound effects ever programmed on the 64. The actual game itself is a mite confusing when you first play it but very easy nontheless, allowing you to relax and really get to know the feel of the control system and the way the map works.

Level two is truly hairy and once you get into the game horrible shocks can be experienced when zooming around a corner and a zombie or giant spider suddenly leaps out at you. The puzzles are very logical and tricky to solve and it helps if you take notes whilst playing the game. For me this is **the** best arcade adventure of the year, with its superlative graphics, sound, atmosphere, brilliant gameplay and puzzles. I recommend playing it with the sound through a hi-fi and with all the lights off. Brilliant! Miss it if you dare!



One of the many puzzles to be solved. Is it safe to take the container at the top of the screen?

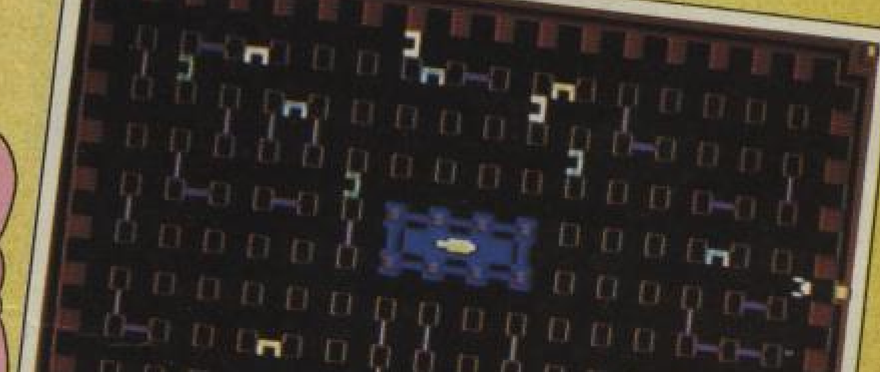
ZZAP! TEST



AAARGH! Attacked by a zombie on level three. The status panel to the right of the screen shows an overall map of the tomb, the time elapsed (hour-glass), energy remaining (door behind the figure) and exhaustion in the form of an ornate ticker tape readout at the bottom.



It's difficult to know how to describe Scarabaeus. *I wouldn't really call it an arcade adventure nor would I class it as a strategy game or simple maze variant. No, it's something much more involved. I think 'brilliant' sums it up quite nicely. Both graphics and sound are exceptional and the atmosphere generated during play is really something else! The music gives the game a sense of urgency and excitement while the heavy breathing and heartbeat sound effects make things very tense. The problems posed are taxing and absorbing and I must say I have never played anything quite like* Scarabaeus *before. This is one hell of a smart game that no self respecting Commodore owner should overlook.*



A map of the third level with the Pharoah's tomb in the centre of the maze and our intrepid explorer to the far right.



Maze games have appeared before by a variety of people, but this one really is the best. The graphics are smooth, colourful and different. The puzzles take some working out and these too, are superbly handled. The animation is faultless, being just about as good as any you could hope to achieve on the Commodore. The sound effects are nothing short of amazing as well. The main tune is excellently written and other sounds are pretty good, but the main effect which impressed all of us, was the breathing and heartbeat sequence. The atmosphere this creates is absolutely spot on — really dramatic. Even the tune played in the elevator sequences is designed with a weird rhythm to throw you out, when you're attempting to reach other levels.

If only there had been a little bit more to the game, it may have been a classic, but as it stands, it's brilliant.

into a regular 4 x 4 key so that any column of hieroglyphs will match any line. If the puzzle isn't completed within the forty moves then the door is barred and another entrance must be tried. It's difficult and torturous work, but well worth it for the great emerald Scarabaeus lies behind those confusing doors...

My mind snaps . . . why am I sitting dreaming when I should be trying to find an antidote? I take a last stare at the sky which is shining though a tiny portal in the ceiling and start towards the lift that will take me to level one. Will I ever see the sky again or will stone blocks be my only company for infinity . . .

Presentation 90%
Superbly produced game with brilliant film-like opening sequence.

Graphics 96%
Fast 3D scrolling maze and excellent all round appearance.

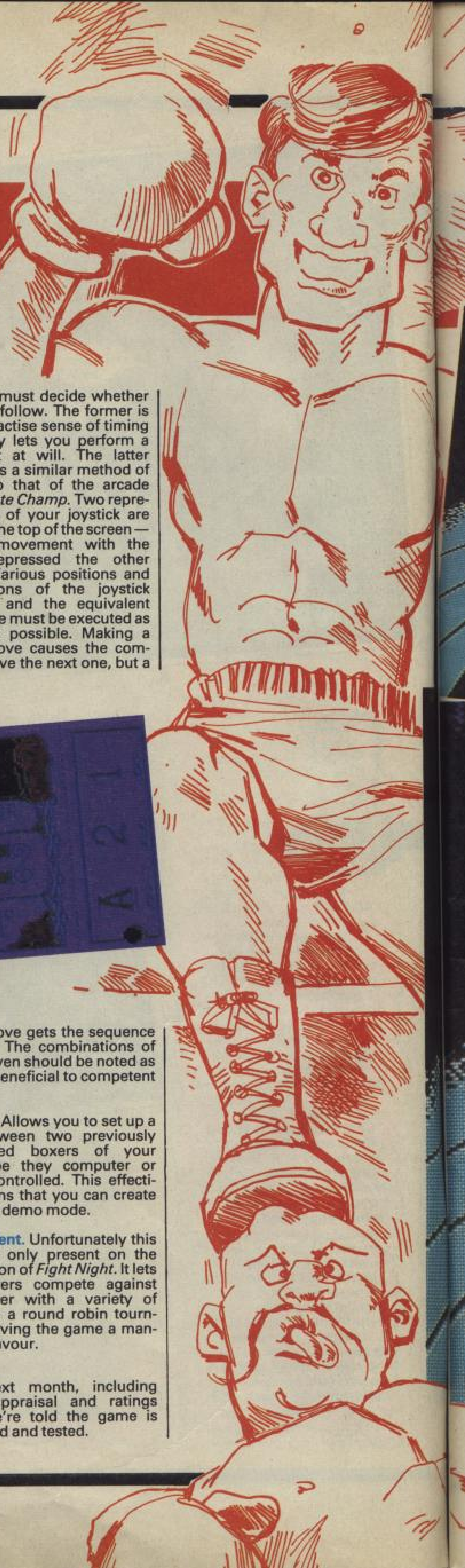
Sound 98%
Incredibly atmospheric tunes and sound effects — the latter especially!

Hookability 96%
Once you start you really get into it.

Lastability 97%
And there's a lot to do and work out.

Value For Money 93%
A very strange game . . .

Overall 96%
But a brilliant one at that.



FIGHT NIGHT

US Gold, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick only

You may or may not remember a small news item that appeared in issue 6 of ZZAP! about a new boxing game from US Gold/ Sydney called *Fight Night*. Well, after much delay it's finally arrived . . . sort of.

You see, at the time of writing the program isn't really complete. In fact there is a succinct little message on the front of the documentation that sums up the situation quite nicely . . .

So, we're sticking to our guns and giving a PREview of the game to whet your appetite as opposed to a full REview of an unfinished product to mislead you. More next month, but for now . . .

Fight Night is the fourth boxing game/simulation to be released on the 64 and has been around a year in the making. It boasts many features and an exciting combination of cartoon quality graphics and equally amusing gameplay. There are four main options present on the cassette version and five on the disk.

Main Event. Essentially a straightforward boxing 'simulation' that lets you box against five of the worlds meanest fighters, each with their own distinctive style (usually dirty), strengths, weaknesses and Super Blow. The latter is a very powerful punch that knocks you for six if it lands successfully. It also deforms your boxer rather amusingly in the process!

As a challenger you must first battle your way past four increasingly ferocious contenders before meeting the Champ — the Bronx Bomber. There are eight different manoeuvres at your disposal and all are accessable via a single joystick. Jabs and body blows can both be thrown or faked and your guard can be raised or dropped. One can also move left and right across the ring to avoid punches.

The boxers start in their respective corners and on the sound of the bell it's time to come out fighting. The bout is held over three rounds with the simple object of knocking out your opponent before he floors you. Points are awarded for landing a successful punch and in the event of a bout going the distance, a win is awarded on score.

Boxing Construction. One of the most amusing and original aspects of *Fight Night* is the **Boxer Construction** option. In this mode it is possible to build and customize personal boxers to either use as opponents or fight with.

When you use the construction mode you are given five different choices of four different parts of the body — arms, legs, head and torso. Putting them together is done using the joystick and is very simple. Once the boxer has been built you can select the colour of his skin, gloves and shorts and whether he's player or computer controlled. When that has been done you are asked to allocate points (out of twenty) to the boxer's left and right punch strength and resilience to attack. Using this you can give the boxer a tremendously powerful left jab, although his right would be weak. The same goes for resilience — the boxer could be practically immune to body punches, but then a blow to the head would really shake him.

If the boxer is computer controlled then you are also asked to define his offensive/defensive and whether he uses brains or brawn in similar fashion.

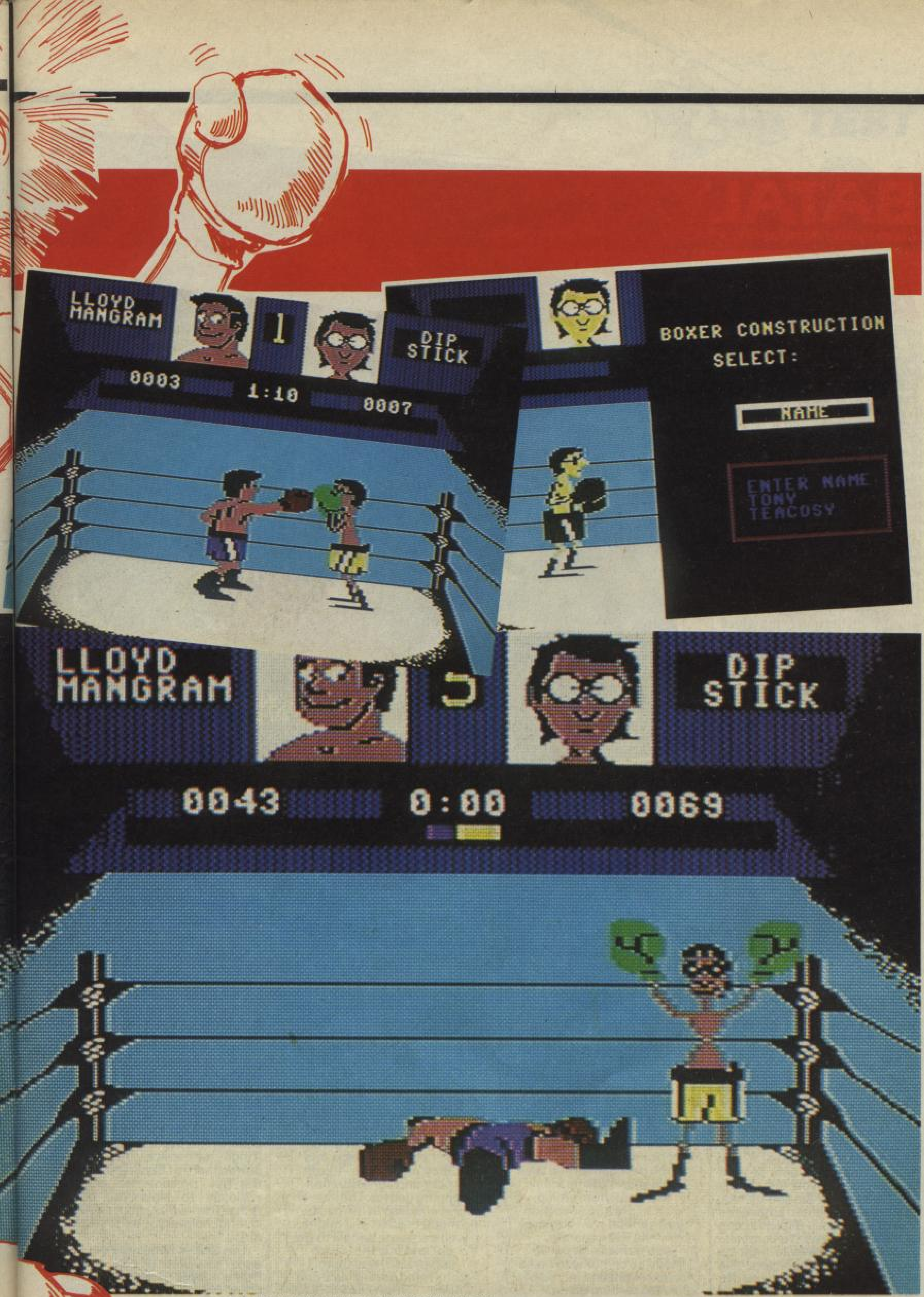
In order to become a competent boxer one must practise punching, ducking and most importantly timing. This is done through **Training Mode.** It also gives you the opportunity to test out the punching power of a constructed boxer. After selecting the boxer you wish to train with and the speed at which to train, you must decide whether to lead or follow. The former is used to practise sense of timing and simply lets you perform a movement at will. The latter however, is a similar method of practice to that of the arcade game *Karate Champ*. Two representations of your joystick are shown at the top of the screen — one for movement with the button depressed the other without. Various positions and combinations of the joystick 'light up' and the equivalent manoeuvre must be executed as quickly as possible. Making a correct move causes the computer to give the next one, but a wrong move gets the sequence repeated. The combinations of moves given should be noted as they are beneficial to competent play.



Sparring. Allows you to set up a bout between two previously constructed boxers of your choice, be they computer or human controlled. This effectively means that you can create your own demo mode.

Tournament. Unfortunately this option is only present on the disk version of *Fight Night*. It lets two players compete against each other with a variety of boxers in a round robin tournament, giving the game a managerial flavour.

More next month, including critical appraisal and ratings when we're told the game is completed and tested.



"NOW REMEMBER THIS IS NOT BASED ON THE COMPLETED VERSION - SO EXPECT THE TEENSIEST CHANGES..."



BATALYX

Llamasoft/Ariolasoft, £9.95 cass, £12.95 disk, joystick only

After four months of keyboard pounding, Jeff Minter is back in the limelight once more. As could well be expected the Zzyaxian are back as well and this time they're on the defensive. In a 'Star Wars' type story, the 'Pseudo Sci Fi Bit' as Minter calls it, you are in control of a daring task force attempting a raid on Zzyax Prime, the controlling planet of their galaxy wide empire. The plan calls for the reactivation of a set of mystical structures that date from a time before the tyranical Zzyaxians conquered the magically technological world for themselves. Upon reactivation, a specially trained task force wise in the ways of Prime's latent powers are to move in and use the near endless energy supply to drive Zzyaxians from their homeworld. With the hub of the wheel shattered, the spokes of the empire should soon splinter into meaningless oblivion. The Zzyax, not totally naive, have left automated defences to repel any such rebel attack.

You play a Psi Op, an entity of advanced psionic ability who can leap between the minds of the task forces each battling to reactivate a mystical site. There are five such sites and one relaxation area to calm your battered neurons. To be an effective psi op you must constantly leap between all five different battlefields, repelling and attacking the enemy. Though it may be tempting, it is wiser to leave those kinds of battle at which you are most proficient till last, because the skill of your opponents grows the more you progress through the game. If you attempt and complete any set task then your other goals become a lot more difficult. So clearly you must choose the order of reactivation carefully. And if the struggle becomes too much, there is still site number six specially created for pleasure and relaxation.

Batalyx is a collection of five games and one non-game, which is a simple form of *Psychedelia*. The six different sections are entered via keys 1 to 6 on the keyboard and each is instantly accessable at any time — the program makes a note of your position when you left. While you are in one of the sub-games, its icon is highlighted among the row of icons each depicting one of the six sections. To complete a section you have to light up one of a row of characters, five characters in the row, one for each game. The character appears in four different sections as you pass various stepping stones within the game. Different characters are are predictably Minteresque objects such as sheep and antelope. Before starting you select a skill level and depending on that level you are given an amount of time to complete *Batalyx*. The times range from one and a half hours down to five minutes, though it's a lot more likely your games will be of the one and a half hour type.



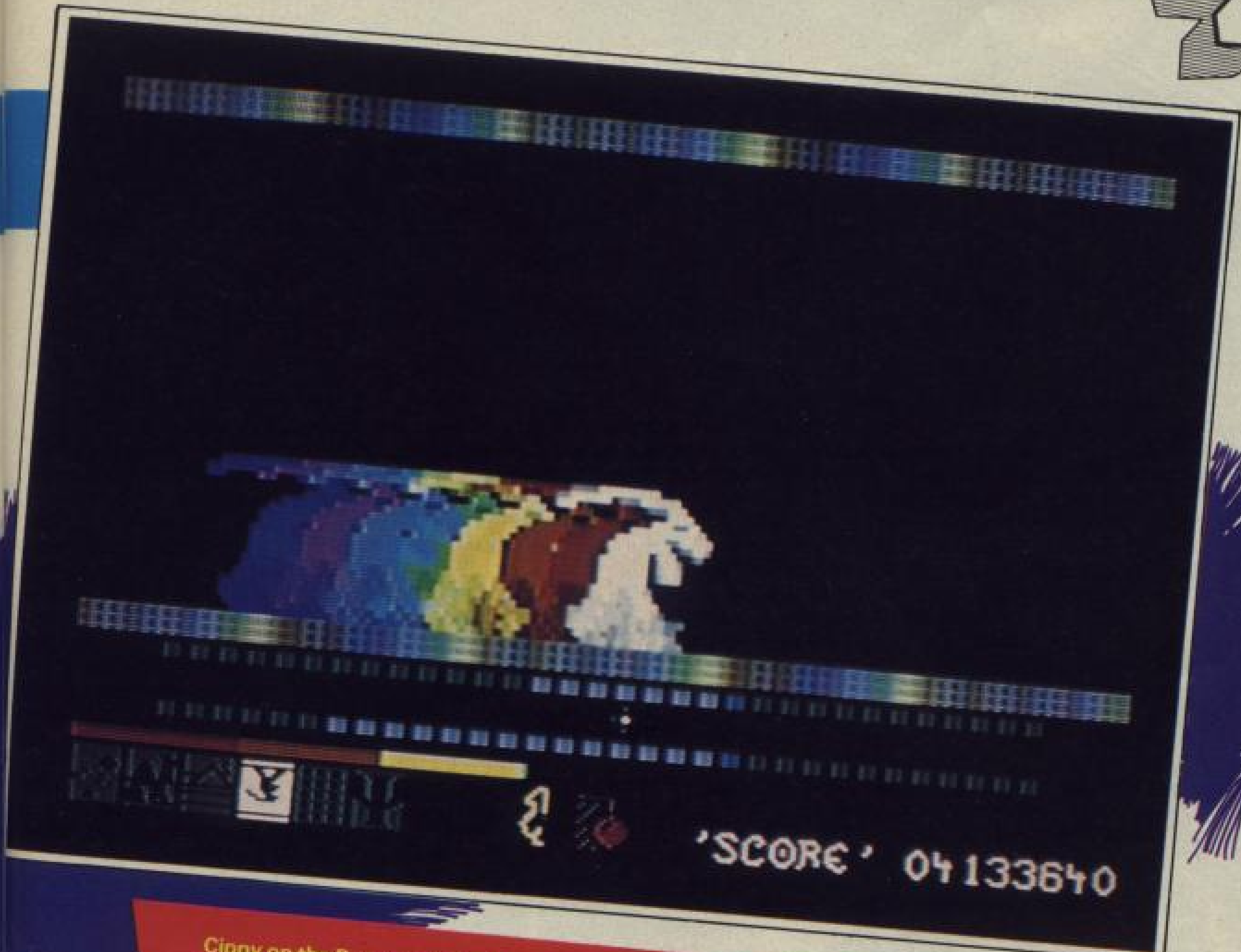
Attack of the Mutant Camels II.



Subgame 1: Hallucin-O- Bomblets

It has been admitted by the hairy one, that this is an 'Asteroids' derivative. Trapped in a wrap round blank screen, you control a small craft using globular little bomblets as the main source of propulsion and attack. To fire a stream of bomblets you merely point the joystick in the direction you wish the stream to travel. The trouble is that thanks to some fairly fundamental laws of physics, the little bomblet machine flies off in the opposite direction. The scene is set on the fringe of space, the upper atmosphere of Zzyax Prime, and the gas present has enough viscosity to slow you down rather than whizz about endlessly and helplessly as in 'Asteroids'.

The task is to destroy the defence satellites placed around Prime's orbit. There are 16 different types each with its own distinct movement pattern. For each satellite totalled, a small



Cippy on the Run with a few friends in tow on the first bonus screen.



Jeff Minter continues where he left off with Ancipital *and has produced yet another original, quality shoot em up. Not only is it his best game yet it's also one of the most impressive programs I've seen on the 64. The five games, well six, are all of a very high quality and together they represent excellent value for money. There are some superb new control methods and the whole game is packed with original touches. The theme of* Hallucin-O-Bomblets *has got plenty of potential and is something that I hope Jeff expands upon.* AMC II *is the weakest of the games but it doesn't make it any less playable.*

The Activation of Iridis Base *is a personal favourite and although it struck me as being something of an improved Simon derivative, I found it one of the most compelling games (probably due to its simplicity)!* Cippy on the Run *is also highly addictive and proves very absorbing to play. Again, plenty of thought has gone into both its conception and execution. The final game,* Syncro II, *makes superb use of colour and sound and requires plenty of fast, logical thought. It had me coming back for more many a time.* Batalyx *is a perfect example of Jeff Minter at his best.*

square on a screen-long bar lights up. If you crash into a stray satellite then some squares are knocked off the bar, the actual quantity depends on how late you entered the game. When all the bar is lighted, half Hallucin-O-Bomblets icon is shown, and to complete the whole icon you must fill another bar.

Kill a sufficient number of satellites and a new type replaces the vanquished minions. Attacking nasties are such things as pint glasses, cippies, ex Prime Minister Aardvarks and similar others.

Subgame 2: Attack of the Mutant Camels II

Attack of the Mutant Camels is possibly one of Llamasoft's most famous creations. Recently it was converted to the Atari and a lot of the creative work infused into the Atari version has now been put back into the Commodore. For those very few of you unaware of AMC's game type, you control a small craft powered with a low energy laser. Attacking are mutant camels. These require zapping many times before they die. When it's nearing its end, the beast kneels down, and can then be vanquished by a couple more well placed laser blasts. The camels' weapons are Bonio's of Doom, a deadly device similar in shape to a famous biscuit for dogs. Complete one sheet by destroying all the camels you can then warp to the next. Flying through the warp, you are pelted with a shower of Bonio's — best avoided as your shields are limited in number.

The Zzyaxians camels aren't real however, they're robots, the shape chosen because man is loath to shoot anything vaguely camel shaped. The pseudo camels' role is as one of Prime's built-in defences, there to ward off any potential attackers.

Subgame 3: The Activation of Iridis Base

Described by Jeff as 'probably the most abstract of the six games' this is essentially a simple (!) test of reactions. The base, disguised as a pyramid, looms in the background while in the foreground there is a group of nine squares representing the nine positions of the joystick — left, right, up, down, fire and diagonals. These squares light up to indicate the direction you are to move the joystick and this must be done immediately. Failure to do so will result in the loss of one of six phosphenes, sort of 'lives'. When all six are gone then that particular attempt at activation is aborted and the sequence has to be started once again.

On successfully activating the base you are treated to a colourful display similar to the effect featured on the album cover of Pink Floyds 'Dark Side of the Moon'.

Subgame 4: Cippy on the Run

Set in the Metapsionic Power Wave Guide Channel (?), nicknamed the Grey Corridor, you must reactivate this structure by physically touching every segment of the structure and thinking really hard. The corridor is a simple version of Minter's *Sheep in Space* planet. There is ground on both top and bottom of the screen and each has its own gravity. The main sprite, a porky Ancipital, can run on either floor and you push the joystick towards the floor you wish to move to. Cippy remains centrally positioned while the corridor scrolls about him.

The Zzyaxians have left a supply of phosphene globes to interfere with your task. These appear in the distance and move closer, if you let them come into the foreground they go haywire and slam themselves into the corridor, mutating a segment. The effect the phosphene has depends on when you start playing, but earlier mutations cause the segments to repel you or throw you to the other side or even warp you to another section of the corridor. There are also a few holes in the corridor which, if you're clumsy enough to fall into one, blast you away and the sheet must be started again. On later screens things get nasty as segments are deactivated when you travel over them twice. To battle the phosphene interferers, a stream of sprites are constantly ejected from Cippy's mouth.

Also supplied is a scanner showing most of the corridor. The mutated and activated segments plus any holes are clearly shown. To light up this games icon you need to complete four corridors. After every second level you are given the opportunity to pick up a substantial amount of extra points on a bonus screen. No phosphenes appear on this screen and Cippy's form is enhanced with a colourful trail of clones following his movements exactly. To collect a massive bonus you need to activate the corridor with no life loss. If time is getting close you can always skip this screen by hopping down the nearest hole.





Activation of Iridis Base.

Subgame 5: Syncro II

Compunet modem owners have probably seen this as a stand-alone program under Jeff's pages. This follow-up to Minter's other freebie hit, *Syncro*, is a game of logic rather than manic blasting. The structure needing reactivating is the Great Psionic Generator of Dhi Oh. To attain reactivation an alignment of globes is required. The globes are given a random angle and velocity and their paths are confined to the size of the screen so that they bounce off the edges. Filling the screen are sixteen different squares, each composed of a particular pattern. You control a cursor which may be positioned on any of the squares. Initially the squares are static but if you move onto one, press fire and move the joystick, the square's pattern scrolls in the direction you move the joystick. Also any like-patterned squares move in unison with the square being activated. If a sphere moves over the square it is slowed down or speeded up depending on the pattern's scrolling direction and speed of scroll. The object of the game is to stop the globes from moving by snaring them onto a square.

As the sheets progress, large areas of black squares appear making the going pretty rough since you can't see the speed or direction of the patterns' scrolling. Throughout the game dramatic sound effects are supplied by a neat little system of chord manipulation. As the squares are changed, the chords change with them. If you care to take the Great Psionic Generator of Dhi up to its highest level and you manage to align all the spheres, then a mega bonus is added. To light up Syncro II's icon you have to travel through eight screens.



Mama Mia! What has Jeff Minter done? Simple. He's taken Revenge, *altered the music, graphics, level select and control method and then thrown the disk in the bin and written* Batalyx *instead.* Batalyx *is certainly Llamasoft's best creation to date and though being totally original to play, it incorporates all the elements that have made previous releases hits.*

The game is so easily underestimated and takes a quite a lot of play to realise its strategic qualities. Personally I really liked Cippy on the Run, *it being my favourite of the bunch. Much welcomed also is the pause mode showing* Psychedelia's previously unrealised calming qualities. Overall one of the star releases of the year, containing a perfect proportion of tactics and mindless blasting. I really hope further Llamasoft releases follow this trend.

Subgame 6: Psychedelia

In the instructions *Psychedelia* is likened to 'Swedish Massage for the Brain'. *Psychedelia* is a pattern creating device controlled via the joystick. The real function is as a pause mode though it should do something to calm your battleshot nerves.



Syncro II.

Presentation 96%
Extremely well thought out and executed program.

Graphics 93%
Excellent definition, animation, use of colour and superb scrolling techniques.

Sound 81%
Very good and unusual Minteresque sound effects.

Hookability 95%
Extremely easy to get into as you can start where you like.

Lastability 94%
Addictive, challenging and above all FUN!

Value For Money 95%
More expensive than previous Minter releases but just as worthy.

Overall 94%
Yet another Minter classic.


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After Virgin's purchase of the Rabbit Software label last year, they have finally decided to release some titles on it. Using Rabbit as their budget software division, one of Virgin's first releases is *Zyto*, a 'Scramble' derivative.

Being the right little urban terrorist that you are, your aim is to destroy a six-level subterranean city using a space ship with a wheeled buggy as a base. The idea is to collect six pieces of bomb, one on each level, and take them with the buggy to level 0. Once you get to level 0 the six bomb sections must be assembled in the same order in which they were collected. Once assembled the bomb detonates, stripping the city's outer defences and allowing you to force it into submission by shooting the inner defences.

The ship has two modes of travel. Initially you are mounted upon a buggy able to move left and right over Zyto's mountainous terrain. When moving over a hill or dell the buggy does its best to keep level by extending and retracting the telescopic legs on which its wheels are mounted. It isn't indestructable however, and clumsy handling may well destroy it.

To get over such problems you use the aerial section of the craft, taking off from the back of the buggy, to fly over Zyto. In this flying mode you can collect blocks scattered about the landscape simply by flying the ship through one. To drop a block press fire. Skillfully placed, these small platforms can be used as bridges for the buggy. Fire also activates the gun, though there's only limited ammunition. The fuel allowance is also limited and quickly drains away as you zoom about the planet. Both fuel and ammunition are replenished by redocking with the buggy.

Obviously Zyto's inhabitants aren't enormously happy with your vandalistic intentions on their city, so they send out a few nasties (or nicies, depending whether you're a human or a Zyton) after you. The majority are airborne and only become a problem on your forrays into the sky, but on the ground there's a particularly nasty buggy-destroying robot wheel. Spinning over the ground you have to destroy it before it gets you.

The six levels of the city are interconnected by holes in the ground and in the roofs of the caverns that house Zyto. If your buggy falls through a hole unprotected it is destroyed but if you have collected a parachute, then a gentle landing is assured.

On the lower levels electrical discharges scatter across the land barring your way. These charges need to be vanquished by turning off all the blocks on a control panel which is made up from blocks of varying patterns. A block can be turned off by flying through it at full speed, and once you have done this, all similarly patterned blocks are also turned off. The blocks are toggle switched so they can be reactivated if you travel through them again.

The game is presented with a horizontally scrolling section on the top of the screen and a status panel on the lower part. The world is wrap round, so if you travel far enough to the left or right, like Magallen, you find your ship back in the same place. The status panel gives details of fuel and ammunition supplies plus the time you have left to complete the mission.



This is a rather odd little game which took me quite a while to get into because the instructions aren't exactly the apex in gameplaying information. Once I'd finally found out what to do I didn't really want to play the game again. It's not exactly bad as such, but it does have many really niggly bits like the wobbly scrolling and the rather uncontrollable rocket. Zyto *is worth playing once I suppose, but there's not much to hold the interest afterwards.*



At first I thought I was in for an improved version of Rabbit's excellent Scramble *game, and there is, visually at least, a touch of* Troopa Truck*... until on playing I found to my disappointment that this was not so. Revamped it may well be but from what? The graphics and sound are both pretty dire and although there are some interesting gameplay elements, I came away feeling somewhat depressed after playing such a 'tepid' piece of software.*

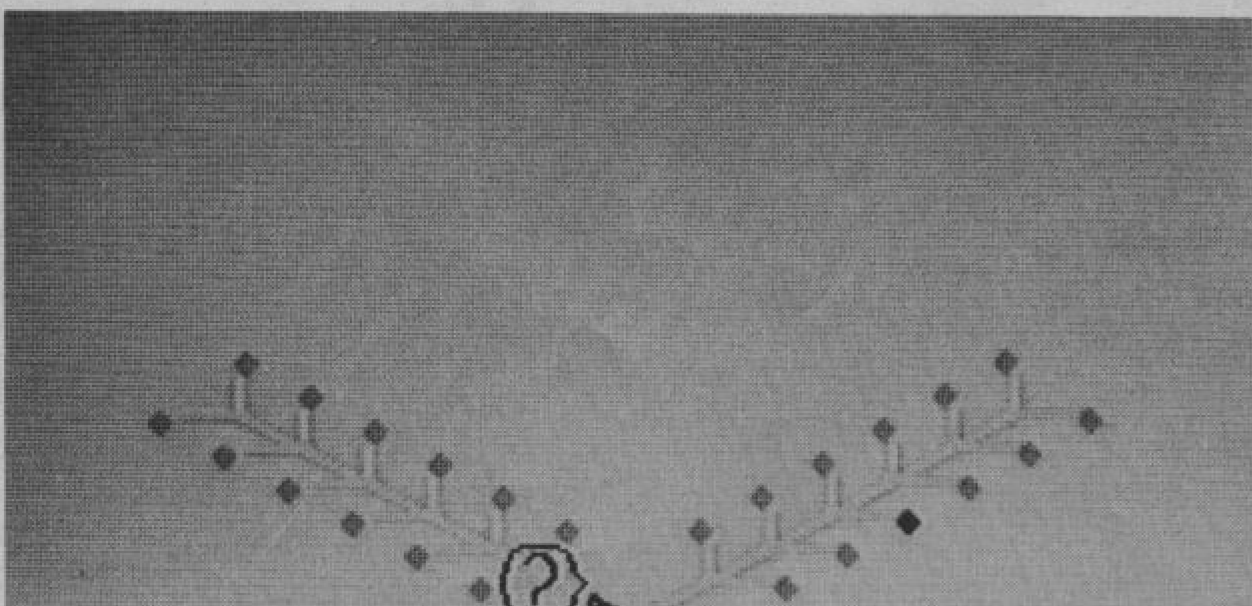


I hadn't ever been impressed with anything from Rabbit in its former incarnation, and I had my doubts that anything significant would have happened now that the label is with Virgin. Really Virgin is selling the same quality of program now that they were putting out when they first appeared and were getting slated by the press. Zyto, though having a few original and interesting ideas, is badly executed with naff scrolling and extremely poor graphics. The game is too hard as well, I found it almost impossible to reach the third level. A point I think annoying is the time it takes to die once death is certain. You can happily lose the buggy and control over the ship yet the game still wanders on for ages. Really I am not impressed and at £3.99, compared to Mastertronic's superior product, it's just not budget.

ZYTO

Rabbit, £3.99 cass, joystick or keys





Presentation 66%
Barely adequate instructions but a few useful options.

Graphics 32%
Poor scrolling, landscape and sprites.

Sound 28%
No music and weak spot effects.

Hookability 47%
There's an urge to play a few games . . .

Lastability 38%
. . . but not many thereafter.

Value For Money 45%
Twice the going rate for a budget game and not even as good as most.

Overall 40%
Rabbit have seen better days and so has budget software.

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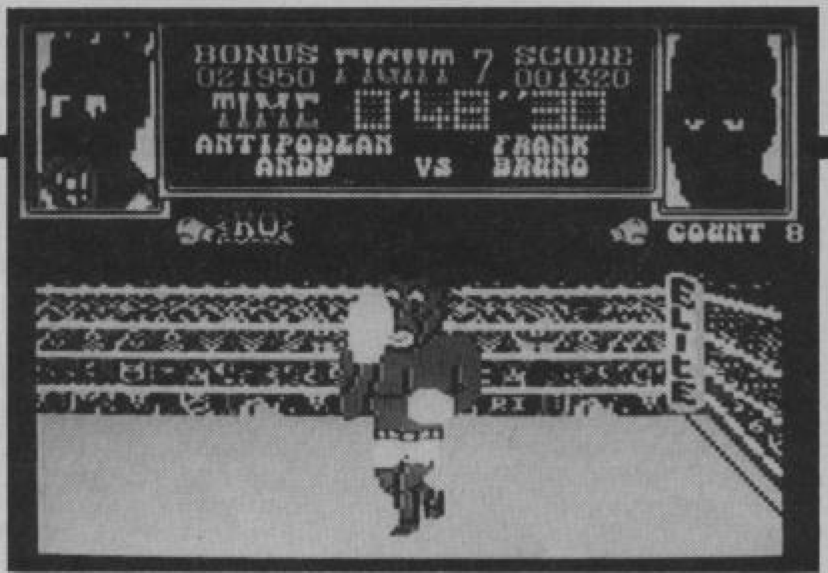
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Frank Bruno's Boxing is essentially a home computer version of the arcade favourite *Punch Out!* The idea of the game is to beat eight boxers, one after the other, in an attempt to become the new World Champion. On beating one fighter you are given a personal code, unique to your initials, so that the next opponent can be loaded in from tape.



FRANK BRUNO'S BOXING

Elite, £9.95 cass, one or two joysticks, keys or joystick with keys

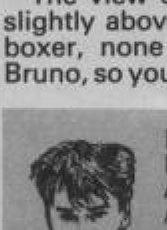


There seems to be a glut of boxing games recently and each seems to be nearly as bad as the other. Frank Bruno's Boxing *is no exception to this rule. The presentation is extremely good, packed with hundred of little touches. Playing the game is near impossible with the annoying control system used. The loading system is also amazingly cumbersome. Once you get into the game you soon find it to be repetitive despite the different boxers, the action merely getting proggesively harder till impossible. What I did like was the loading music, a very good version of Trans X's Living on Video, though it hardly makes it worth shelling out hard earned cash.*

The view of the ring is from slightly above and behind your boxer, none other than Frank Bruno, so you're looking into the screen with the opponent facing. As a digitised Frank one can perform several manoeuvres, such as left and right head punches, body blows, a Knock Out punch, ducking and of course guard up and down. Using these skills the other fighter has to be knocked down a total of three times within the given time limit.

Both boxers have a 'power' bar and each time a successful punch is landed the bar increases in length. To get the power bar to its maximum, successive accurate punches must land on target. But if you should get hit when your bar is at the halfway mark then it depletes — rapidly! Once it reaches its peak the KO punch, a vicious right hander, must come into play. If this deadly blow is accurate a couple of times then the opponent is usually floored. If, on the other hand, he gets **his** bar to maximum then his next punch has the same effect. On the first two occasions when a boxer gets knocked down he always get up. But on the third . . . Bocko! He's down for good!

Most of the other boxers have a special punch or move pertaining to their name and unless this can be avoided, you will be floored instantly. The first boxer encountered smacks you viciously round the head with both hands while Fling Long Chop, the second opponent, drop kicks — not quite the Queensbury way! Subsequently the moves and techniques of each boxer must be learned if one is to succeed. Fortunately there is a 'replay last match' option so that the last boxer can be tackled again and again until you are eventually competent and finally victorious. If you manage to plow your way through all eight boxers then a newspaper, with a headline proclaiming you Champion of the World, is shown.



Frank Bruno's Boxing *has been long awaited by many since its announcement some months back. Then, with only* Alligata's Knockout *to threaten it in the boxing game field, it would have taken the market by storm. Since then both* Barry McGuigan's *and* Fight Night *have been released and both are much better, with more depth, better gameplay and graphics. The graphics on FBB's are reasonable but many of the characters have massive glitches in them, and sometimes they even come apart! The gameplay is rather limited with only the eight boxers to challenge you, and they're not too difficult to beat either. The control method is pretty tricky too, especially using two joysticks or joystick and keyboard. It would have been good three or four months ago, but now perhaps it's a bit too late to make any real impact on the boxing game market.*



When Frank Bruno's Boxing *was first promised there weren't any other boxing games on the market. Since then however there have been three prominent releases (all for different reasons though!) in the form of Alligata's* Knockout, *Activision's* Barry McGuigan *and more recently US Gold's* Fight Night. *With the latter two games to compete against I don't think that* Frank Bruno's *stands much of a chance, because, to my mind, it has an inferior approach and is much less interesting to play. If this had come out at the same time as the very popular Spectrum version, then it would have had a better run. Sorry Elite, but I'm afraid it's a case of too little too late.*

Presentation 91%
Loading the boxers from cassette is a real pain but the overall presentation is excellent.

Graphics 79%
Big, above average quality sprites with equally large glitches.

Sound 72%
Nice tunes, but all a little short.

Hookability 78%
Desire to become champ is high.

Lastability 62%
But it's pretty simple and will you go back to it after.

Value For Money 72%
'Punch Out!' is ageing and there are better boxing games about.

Overall 69%
Three months ago it would have been the best, now it's a case of try it and see if you like it.

DORIATH

Rabbit Software, £3.99 cass, joystick and keys

In days of old Atelan, the Lord of Time was besotted by a fair maid by the name of Fianna. So in love was Atelan that he gave her the legendary Coronet of Arien, the wearer of which would become immortal. Though not telan's feelings for her, smart girl that Fianna was, she still accepted his generous gift. Soon, however, Atelan discovered his love was never to be returned and he flew into a rage, taking back the Crown from his love and casting it into the depths of Doriath. And there the coronet has lain, venomously guarded by the minions of this dark place.

Recently Mage and Lore Master, Elidaan, has discovered the scroll of Fianna and learnt of this sad tale. As there wasn't much to do and Elidaan fancied being immortal, he decided to brave the sanctuary of Doriath and have a go at retrieving the Crown of Arien.



This is where you come in, your job to guide Elidaan through Doriath to his final goal. You enter Doriath with no possessions and very a small repertoire of spells. Around the caves of Doriath you find var ious items and spells encased within casks, which are opened by passing over them, whereupon you are told of the new addition to your inventory.

Apart from the different spells, the objects you encounter are of five different types. Stamina Potions boost Elidaan's energy which is displayed as a percentage at the top of the screen. Using this potion at the right moment can get our hero out of many a tricky spot. Portcullis Keys allow passage through any portcullis barring the way while Trapdoor Keys are used to get past trapdoors. Fungata Potions cure Elidaan of any ill effects caused by the mushrooms growing in some



ZZAP! TEST



The combined programming talents of Ian Gray, Lee Braine and Chris Cox return in this latest release from Virgin stroke Rabbit. I think the last thing they did was Commodore's Spirit of the Stones *which wasn't too bad as platform games go. The same can be said of* Doriath *in that it's an okey doke arcade adventure, with poor graphics but good, Chris Coxesque (!) music. The game isn't particularly taxing mentally, although there is quite a high frustration element as the wizard does jump rather strangely and awkwardly. A fairly competent release and certainly a lot better than the other Rabbit /Virgin game,* Zyto. *Still, overpriced for what it offers though.*

caves while Cloronar Potions are used as a defence if they are drunk when standing next to a plant or shoot. Each object can only be used once though a store of them may be built up.

Along the top of the screen is set of five symbols each depicting one of the different objects you find. Underneath each symbol is displayed how many of that particular artifact you are carrying. To use an object you position a cursor over the symbol you want with the F1 key. Hitting F7 then activates the object.

There are nine spells you could collect in addition to the one you are given upon entering Doriath. Different spells kill different creatures and to wield one you must hold fire and press down. The spell then appears and can be controlled with the joystick.

The game is presented in classic arcade adventure style, using a standard flick screen method. Elidaan can go left, right and also levitate for short distances. To travel between some sheets you must use a rope. About the cave there are various nefarious characters all willing to sap your stamina. Some of these foes are a mite more malevolent than others, some of them firing arrows at you. In some screens you may be unfortunate enough to come across the odd dragon or two spitting deadly fireballs. If you're foolish enough to guide Elidaan into the dragon then it's game over. Facing slightly less powerfull foes you find that 'Game Over' only appears when your stamina drops below 2%.



This is a pretty gruesome game. The graphics are very poor with badly animated single colour sprites and a grating tune (contrary to what the cassette box says). The instructions are very poor with practically no indication of what you're supposed to do. Rabbit will have to get their act together if they want to gain a better reputation than the one they've now got with their first two releases.

Presentation 67%
Adequate but not outstanding.

Graphics 38%
Coarse overall effect with poor definition, animation and bland use of colour.

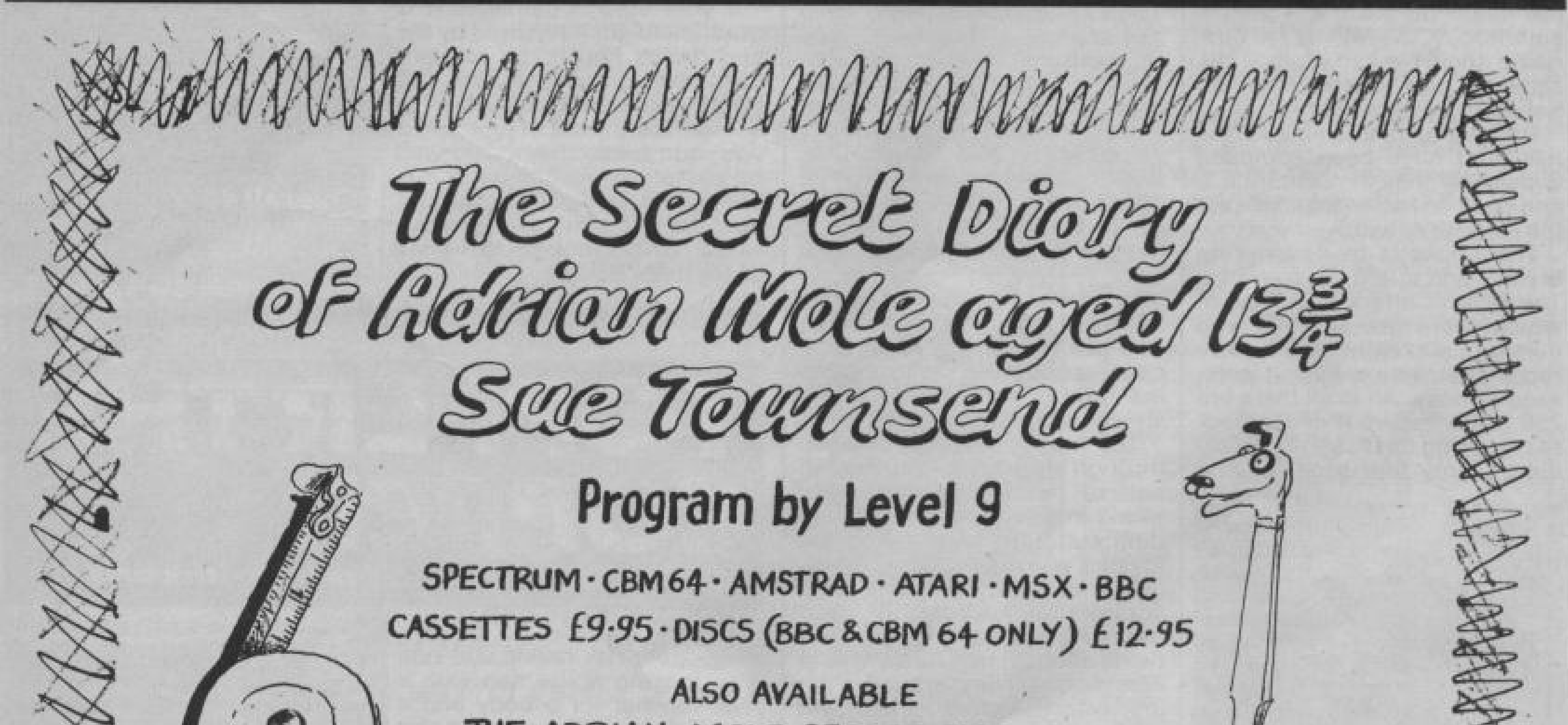
Sound 66%
Fair version of 'Hall of the Mountain King' but unimaginative FX.

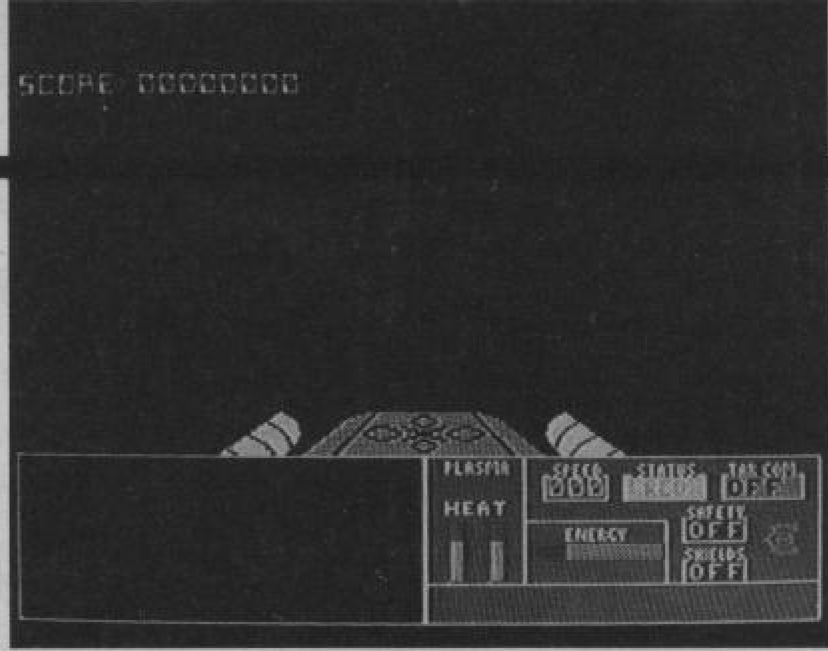
Hookability 60%
The exploration bug bites . . .

Lastability 46%
. . . but its effect soon wears off.

Value For Money 49%
Budget software ought to be released at a budget price.

Overall 47%
Not one of the better arcade adventures available but even so there's a lot worse.





CODENAME MAT II

Domark, £8.95 cass, joystick with keys

Codename Mat II, recently released on both the Spectrum and the Amstrad, is curiously misnamed on the Commodore seeing as how its predecessor, *Codename Mat*, never appeared on the 64.

The scenario casts you as Mat, champion of the good, defender of the innocent and scourge of the Myons. The Myons are an evil bunch of aliens set on destroying the energy collection grid based around the planet Vesta, a planet rich with the famed substance Karillium, the most precious substance in the known universe. Karillium is mega form of Baby Bio, one small pinch and a desert becomes a thriving jungle. Vesta's energy grid also happens to be Earth's most important power source.

The reason for the Myons' onslaught is that the planet Vesta was under their control until Earth launched an unmanned attack force and took it. Obviously a bit annoyed about the theft of such a valuable commodity, the Myons are now doing their best to disrupt the satellite grid distributing the Karillium power to Earth.

With tempers all round on the rise, you have been equipped with a new ship, the Centurion II, and sent to defend and repair the satellite network.

The object is to destroy the Myon's and guard the satellites. The Myon's attack in waves, of which there are eight. If you destroy all eight then they repeat themselves with an increased ferocity. All in all there are 256 levels before it cycles back to repeating itself. Mat is defending twenty four satellites and after clearing a wave of Myons there is a chance to repair them. You can also do any repairwork necessary on the Centurion but the time units allocated to the ship and satellites is limited.

The main action is viewed through the cockpit on the top half of the screen, here, any aliens in view plus the surrounding stars are seen. Using the joystick you can move up, down, left and right, for other ship controls the keyboard is relied upon. As you move the starfield twirls about in true 3D style as in *Elite*. For travelling around in the immediate vicinity there are information panels depicting the status of the ship on the bottom of the screen. The information shown is up to you and a number of different status screens can be called up.

To keep you up to date on the Myon's manoeuvres, three types of scanner are provided with varying intensities. The Quadrant Chart gives a view of the twenty four satellites and the damage status of each link in the energy grid. The Long and Short Range Charts are displayed simultaneously, both working along the same lines. Centurion is shown as a central dot viewed from above, and the Myon ships appear as moving dots. However no information is given about the enemy's vertical position in relation to you and things can get confusing. When in battle a semi-intelligent Battle Scanner can be called up. This tracks the alien nearest to you and also gives a reading of his range. During battle you can choose between photons or laser. The lasers fire blasts quickly one after the other but the photon weapon is a bit slow, on the other hand it won't blow up if overheated.

If your ship is damaged it is possible to get it repaired by the two droids that come as standard fittings on Centurion. The trouble is they take their time in doing the simplest of jobs and if you're in battle they could well be destroyed. At any point it is possible to save out your current progress or load a previously saved game though this may take a bit of time.



I have never really thought that much of the Star Raiders *type of game as I find them very banal and monotonous to play.* Codename Mat II *is no exception and while it seems a good, if unoriginal, variation on the theme I don't see much point in releasing something as uninspiring and 'cliched'. Graphically it's nothing special with a rather poor and slow 'deep space' star effect and little else to impress. Even though the sound is limited to nothing more than a few spot effects it is very good and suits the game well. Having said that I think some title screen music would have livened things up no end. I'm not sure how popular the genre is with other game players but* Codename Mat II *hasn't swayed my opinion in the slightest.*



After seeing Codename Mat 2 *on the Spectrum I just couldn't believe how similar it was on the 64. The same flickery graphics, the same snail's pace. There was, and I still can't wholly believe this, even attribute problems! The game scenario was extremely poor, of an even lower standard than a majority of the science fiction hokum contained on most game's inlays. Controlling the ship from the keyboard is asking the impossible given the keyboard layout Domark have provided. The direction keys are the same as the cursor keys on the Spectrum. I must admit to being bored by the whole thing with even the inexcusable badness of* A View to a Kill *seeming passable after this offering.*



I've played so many of these type of games that playing yet another 'save the galaxy single handed' job really gets to me. It's not as if this one offers anything special — just the age old ingredients handed down from Star Raiders. *The graphics and sound are both pretty poor and wading through the mass of instructions was almost like reading a familiar schoolbook. Fresh blood really needs to be injected into this type of game because as it stands it's very, very dull indeed.*

Presentation 60%
Sufficiently informative instructions.

Graphics 44%
Slow '3D' and unforgivable colour clash.

Sound 63%
Some nice 'spacey' spot FX.

Hookability 56%
Vast galaxy to explore and only a few Myons to shoot.

Lastability 37%
Repetitive 'action' holds little interest.

Value For Money 39%
Below average price . . . and it shows.

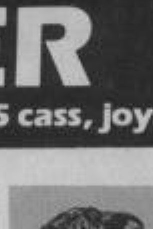
Overall 40%
May prove appealing to Sci Fi nostalgia fans.

TOPPER THE COPPER

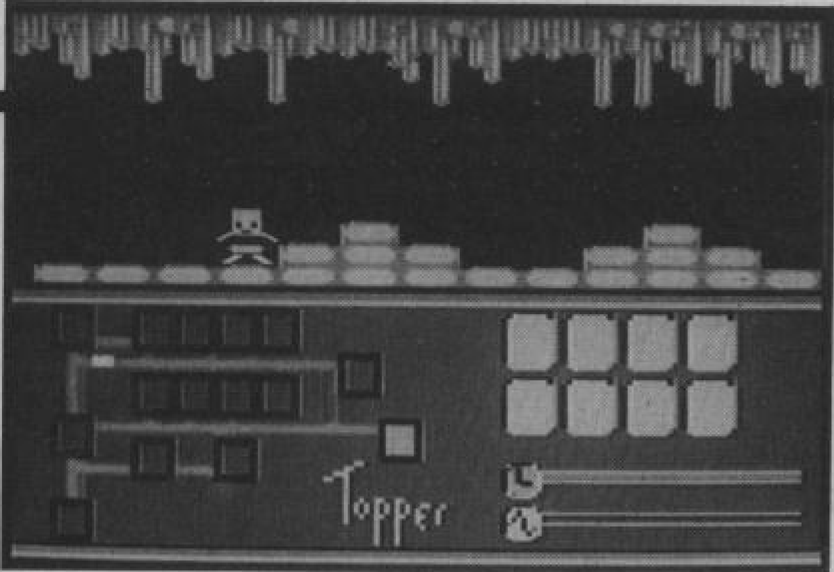
English Software, £8.95 cass, joystick only

Copper is rather an odd looking policeman with a top hat for a body and a pair of diddy little arms and tiny legs on which he bounds along. Strange though he may seem he's still an arm of the law and is out to solve a crime. This is where the player comes into the game. Topper has to be guided round a strange environment to find vital clues so he can collar one of the seven suspects of a crime.

Topper's beat is a very weird one with many different connected rooms containing platforms and loads of 'orrible nasties that sap his energy, shown by a diminishing bar. Should the bar reach zero then Topper dies. Never fear though, if the energy situation is rather dire then Topper can return to



When I first played this I had a certain feeling of deja vu. It wasn't until a while later that someone said that the game reminded him of Thing on a Spring *when it clicked.* Topper the Copper*'s game structure is very similar to* Thing*'s and the Topper character also* **moves** *like thing. That aside the game has nice graphics and provides quite a challenge to any platform fanatic. It's not bad by any means, but by no means a classic.*



the 'police station' room to replenish his energy.

Dotted around each of the rooms are safes which Topper has to collect. In eight of these safes lie the clues to the crime along with the key to the jail. All these need to be collected to allow Topper to complete the game. Most of the safes sit in very awkward places and Topper has to leap his way up from platform to platform in *Thing on a Spring* style to reach them.

At the bottom of the screen is an *Impossible Mission* type radar scanner showing all the rooms and where you are in relation to them. The map has three storeys and each storey is linked by lifts. Well, they're not really lifts, more like the buckets on chains that you find on building sites. Jumping on these as they go past takes a bit of practice — if you miss one then you plummet down the lift shaft and fall into the giant boiler (which, not unnaturally, tends to be a fatal manoeuvre). If you're going up then also beware. There are crushers awaiting a Topper who doesn't jump off in time.

If all the clues are collected then Topper can make his way to the courtroom. Here a random riddle is printed and using that and the clues which you have collected, the suspect can be successfully aprehended and taken to jail.

A nice feature about this game is that the seven different clues and seven different suspects are randomly chosen every game so even if you solve it the next game could be completely different.



English Software have been pretty quiet of late with not a single release for the 64 in the past nine months (perhaps they're warming up for something big, me thinks)? Topper the Copper *isn't an exceptional game but without attempting to sound too pretentious, I would say it's a passable one. Both the sound and graphics are above average and although the gameplay is more than a touch 'contrived', the game proves an enjoyable way of passing the time.*



If you imagine Thing on a Spring with everything that was good in it taken out and replaced by something inferior you would have Topper the Copper. The graphics are of a crude and gaudy nature, using bright clashing colours. The sprites are also ill-defined and move sluggishly about the screen. The overall game object is near impossible and I found myself soon getting bored before I'd even come near to making any progress. The music is tacky and fitting for such a game. I'm afraid that Topper the Copper *is a bit of a let down after the high quality of previous English Software releases.*

Presentation 70%
Nice title screen and a couple of options.

Graphics 69%
Colourful landscapes with big, bright, bold baddies.

Sound 68%
Reasonable tune which can be turned off or on.

Hookability 71%
Will you solve the crime?

Lastability 66%
And the six others for that matter?

Value For Money 67%
Just below the average Commodore price.

Overall 68%
A reasonable platform aardvark.

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4. Lunar Landing
5. Plasma Bolt
6. Startrek
7. Radar Landing
8. Attacker
9. Galactic Dog Fight
10. Psion Attack
11. Ivasive Action
12. Noughts & Crosses
13. Boggles
14. Pontoon
15. Ski Jump
16. Hangman
17. Old Bones
18. Thin Ice
19. Orbitter
20. Motorway
21. Force Field
22. Nim
23. Tunnel Escape
24. Barrel Jump
25. Cannonball Battle
26. Overtake
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28. Smash the Window
29. Space Ship
30. Jet Flight
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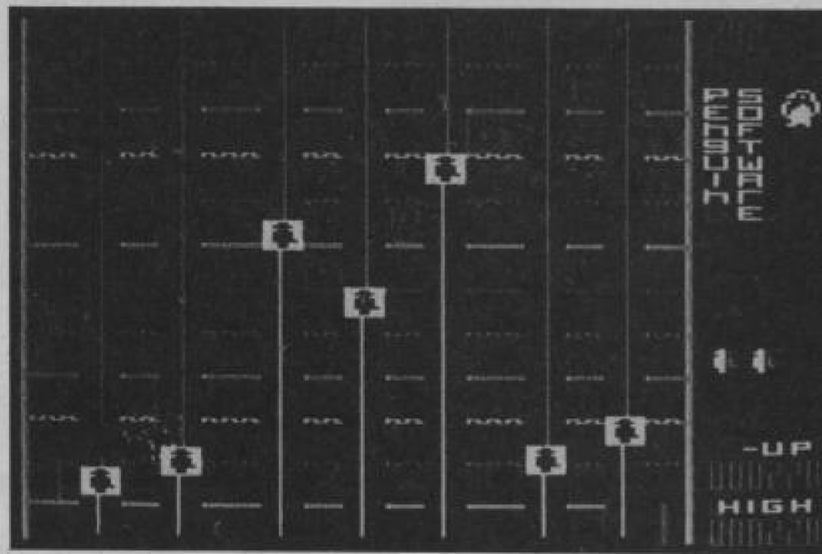
Cascade Games Ltd., 1-3 Haywra Crescent, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG1 5BG, England. Telephone: (0423) 504663. *Registered Number 1755554*

First release on the controversial Electric Dreams label (this is the Ocean/US Gold one, not the Rod Cousens/Activision one) is a double game pack featuring two games that made the rounds on the American market about a year ago. *Spy's Demise* and its follow up, *The Spy Strikes Back*, were originally written by Penguin Software, the famous publisher's computer games arm.

First of the two, *Spy's Demise*, has you playing a world weary secret agent. While sipping



These two crusty 'classics' look like a couple of US Gold rejects and after Doughboy that's really saying something. Neither game is appealing in any shape or form although I did get a **brief** *spell of enjoyment from* Spy's Demise. *If following releases are of such abysmal quality as this then I don't think that the other Electric Dreams will have much in the way of competition.*



SPY'S DEMISE/THE SPY STRIKES BACK

Electric Dreams, £9.95 cass, joystick or keys

upon a cocktail in the Bankok Hilton you overhear two enemy agents talking about a highly vital encoded message, parts of which are hidden on separate floors of the diplomatic mission in Pyongyang. The decoded message is a key to limitless wealth but till now the Ukraine's best cryptologists have been unable to make any sense of it. World weary as you are, tired of the day to day existence as a spy for hire, you see that if you manage to infiltrate the building and find the answer to the mystery you will never have to work another day for the rest of your life.

Upon reaching the Pyongyang mission you find that to find each part of the clue you need to get to the top of each respective floor. Every floor is subdivided into many different levels and to travel between these you have to cross to the opposite side from where you start off. Barring your way are a number of lifts patrolling up and down the floor. The lifts move vertically and are best avoided since they contain Embassy guards. The difficulty becomes apparent as soon as you try to move because once started, there's no way of stopping.

When you've completed a screen by reaching the top, a part of the code is displayed and you are transported to the next floor. This is exactly the same as the first except you start a level higher.

After your hectic exploits in *Spy's Demise* you have been confined to a desk job at the office for recuperation purposes. Things are getting dull until late one night you receive a call from the chief. You stumble out of bed and make it to the offices where chief explains that the notorious terrorist, Dr Xavier Tortion, has been tracked down to a castle in the East German town of Aichenbach. Dr X's latest diabolical plan is to destroy a famous city with a nuclear device if his demands aren't met by a frighteningly imminent deadline. The chief explains how your desk job is over and you are being sent to try and recover Xavier's secret plans. Several operatives have been sent in but to date none have managed to return alive. It's time *The Spy Strikes Back*

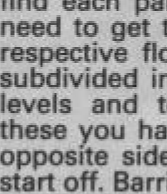
The aim is to collect nine clues scattered about the Doctor's well guarded castle. Once collected these clues enable the Secret Service to defeat Dr X. The plan is for you to get in and out as quickly as possible, hopefully your presence will go undetected but if Dr X's minions do catch sight of you the security becomes more intense.

The Doctor's castle is made up from five floors each containing twenty four vaulted sections. You can move between each vaulted section and within you find sixteen small rooms. Patrolling the sections are security droids on the look out for any prowlers or intruders. Normally wandering about aimlessly, they set their sirens howling and give chase if one is in line of sight with you. The droid can easily be avoided by ducking into one of the sixteen subrooms. Once it has lost sight of you the droid resumes its patrol.

On entering a section there are no visible exits and to find a gateway to the next room you have to collect a flashing ring that is placed in the corridors somewhere. Occasionally a small spy replica will appear instead, collect this and you are in possession of one of the nine clues needed to defeat Dr X.

You control a small spy sprite around the top three quarters of the display containing an aerial view of one of the vaulted sections. At the bottom of screen there is a status box containing a plan view of the floor you're on, highlighting the room you're in, plus a side showing which of the five floors you're currently on.

Lifts connect the floors, the liftshafts are within one of the sixteen roomlets. Also within the mini rooms you come across various articles that boost your score.



When a company's first releases are two games that I saw on the Atari about three and a half years ago it doesn't bode too well, especially when I remember them as being pretty crummy then. They're both very simple games and have awful graphics, sound and game content. The price is a joke — £9.95 for them both! There's a Mastertronic twin pack at £1.99 that contains better games than these.



These two games are not exactly what I'd launch a software label on. Looking at the small print on the cassette label I noticed the two games were respectively copyrighted in the 1982 and 1983. I would hazard a guess that they weren't even exceptional then. Of the two, my favourite was Spy's Demise *and although being mind bogglingly simple, it was quite addictive. That was until I managed to get to the second screen. This was exactly the same as the first only you start one line up.* The Spy Strikes Back *was very dull indeed. The graphics were of a very simple and extremely repetitive nature. The different tunes were rather basic too. The overall aim would provide a bit of a challenge though the extreme similarity of the different screens would soon drag you down to the 'why am I bothering?' stage.* Spy's Demise *may have been received quite well if it had been priced around the £1.99 mark, though I feel even then that may be asking a bit too much for* The Spy Strikes Back. *At around five pounds each of Electric Dreams' first releases would be well worth avoiding.*

Presentation 51%
Sufficient instructions but lacking in options.

Graphics 15%
Small, badly animated sprites and little variation.

Sound 40%
Many tunes of below average quality.

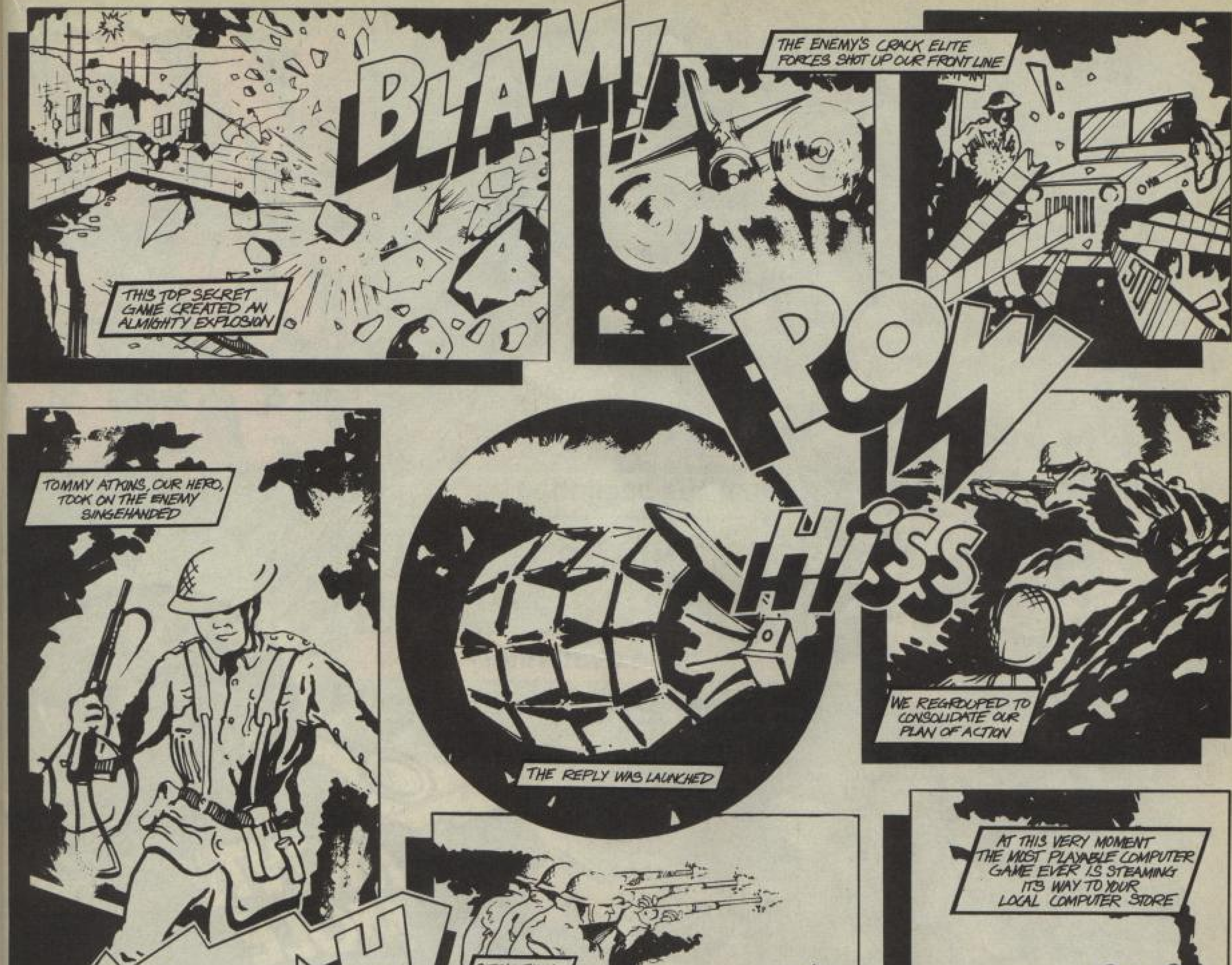
Hookability 31%
Makes you wonder whose side the Americans are on.

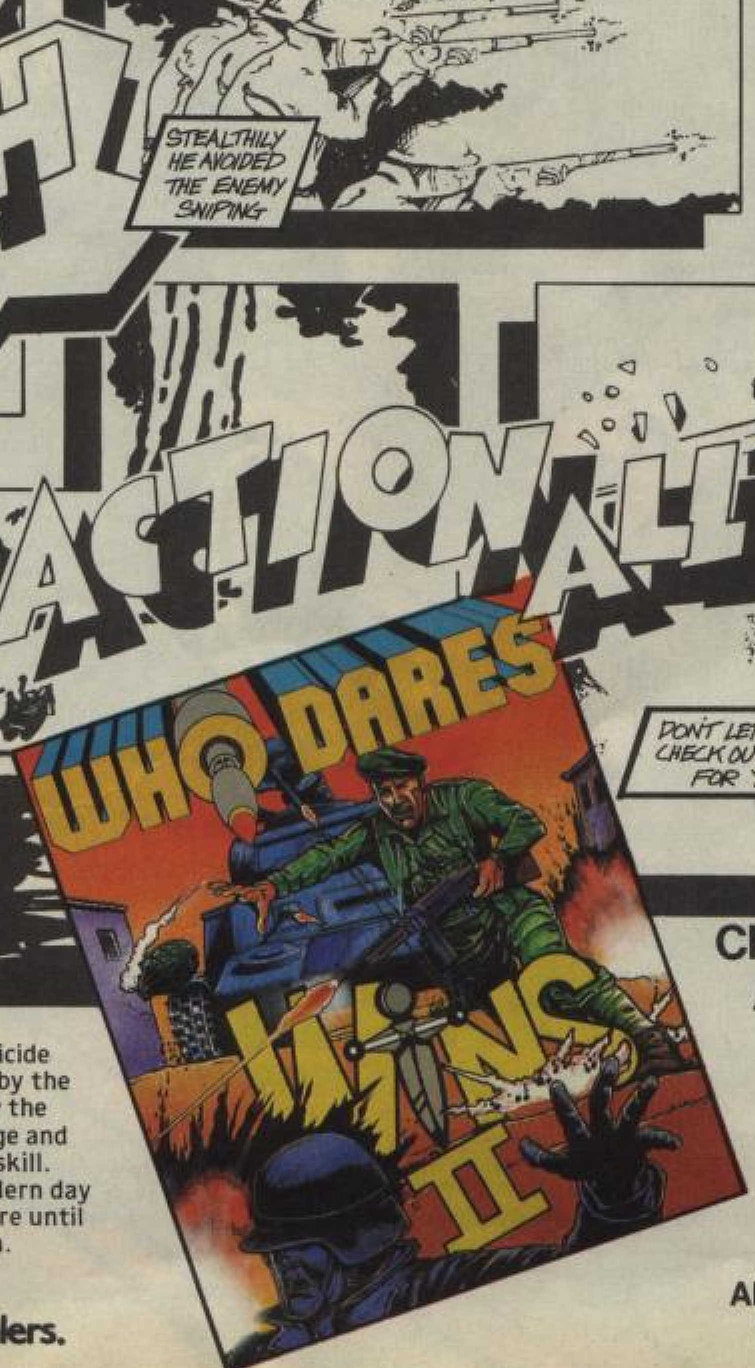
Lastability 12%
A few games are enough to inspire you to defect.

Value For Money 9%
To think you get so little for so much.

Overall 10%
This blast from the past should have stayed there.







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At last he's free but can he make the cross-channel ferry on time?

SIZZLER

ACE

Cascade, £9.95 cass, joystick and keys





A*ce* is a jet combat flight simulator. Wait, and don't you dare turn the page. Okay, so it's a flight simulator and flight simulators are often a bit boring. Right? Wrong! This one certainly isn't, so read on.

When you start a game you are given a large list of options. Firstly you can choose the time of year, either winter or summer and whether it is day or night. When you do so the screen changes to the appropriate colours.

You can then equip your plane with weaponry — air-to-ground missiles, air-to-sea, air-to-air or multirole, a limited number of all three. You also have a standard armament of 8,000 rounds of shells and decoy flares. Shells are useful for aerial combat whilst decoy flares will help you dodge any heat-seeking missiles that are fired towards you.

Once that's done select the skill level from the nine provided and then you can start flying.

The aircraft itself is equipped with the usual instrumentation needed to fly a plane — speedometer, altimeter, thrust and fuel gauges, roll and pitch indicator and a compass. You also have some hi-tech onboard equipment — an audio/visual computer output screen which speaks as well as displays messages and warnings. There is a radar which shows anything in the immediate vicinity, either in the air or on the ground and it also shows whether a plane is above or below you. To help you keep an eye on what's going on behind you there is an effective

This is without doubt THE most exciting flight sim on the 64 to date. The graphics are excellent with extremely fast update on the horizon and very realistic ground 3D with trees, mountains and the enemy forces all zooming up to you at high speeds. There are many really original aspects to the game itself, like the brilliant mid-air refuelling (an exciting sequence), the two player option and the excellent rear view camera. These



touches put *Ace* a notch above the rest. Don't be put off by the fact that it's classed as a flight simulator — it's more of a true to life shoot em up since it is so easy to fly — and the game has scoring.





rear-view camera which shows any enemy planes that are on your tail on a screen in the cockpit, a sort of rear-view mirror if you like.

You begin any mission on the ground. No start-in-the-air short cuts here — you have to actually zoom down the runway and take off. Luckily getting into the air isn't too difficult — just press the thrust to maximum, wait until you're doing 150 knots then pull back on the joystick and you take off. **Don't** forget to raise the undercarriage otherwise your plane breaks up!

Once you're in the air you can refer to the SIM (**S**atellite **I**ntelligence **M**ap). This shows the surrounding allied and enemy areas (so you can prepare for flak when you fly over them), allied airfields and any enemy forces whether they're in the air, on the sea or on the ground. Using this you can fly to their location using the compass and attack them, although don't forget to select the correct type of weaponry to deal with them otherwise precious armament may be wasted.

You are likely to run out of fuel, and when this occurs, you are told the height and speed you should fly to rendezvous with a refuelling plane flying a regular path deep in allied territory. Refuelling in mid-air is a tricky business — if you're only a few feet out or a little bit too fast, the consequences can be disastrous. If you do ever get in any sort of trouble then ejection from the plane is a viable alternative to frying, although to do this safely you should be over allied territory.

An original feature in *Ace* is the two player mode whereby one player flies the fighter while the other aims and fires missiles or shells.



For a long time Fighter Pilot *has held the title as best fighter simulator but now Digital Integration's hit has well and truly been toppled with* ACE. *I just couldn't believe how much there was in it. My favourite of* ACE*'s many aspects was the refueling stage. The speech was a bit scratchy at times but the sound effects more than made up for this aural deficiency. All in all the best game of this type I've come across to date with so much content it should keep the most avid flight enthusiast interested for ages.*



Flight/combat simulators seem to be all the rage at the moment, with two well established classics, Skyfox *and* Rescue on Fractalus, *currently riding high in the charts. While I am not a great lover of flight simulators, I found the aforementioned games very enjoyable to play, probably because they're more of a shoot em up than simulator.* ACE *on the other hand, didn't appeal to me that greatly due to the fact it was a bit too much of a flight simulation than it was a game, although there are many gameplay elements present. I wasn't overly impressed with the graphics to tell you the truth and I don't think that the 3D works all that well . . .*



Presentation 93%
Good instructions and plenty of options.

Graphics 89%
Fast, effective 3D and some great little touches.

Sound 79%
Efficient jet engine noises, machine gun chatter, explosions and some reasonable speech.

Hookability 89%
A very easy simulator to fly . . .

Lastability 91%
. . . with many aspects to practise.

Value For Money 88%
Tiny bit steep.

Overall 90%
Despite reviewing disagreement, generally considered a very impressive flight/combat simulator.



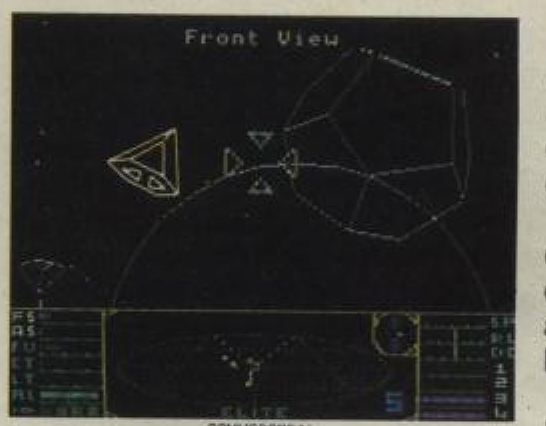
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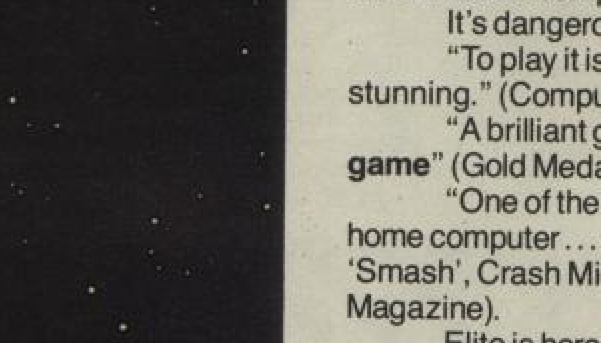
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*Zzap! 64 Magazine.



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ZZAP! TEST

Z

Rino Software, £9.95 cass, joystick only

Chris Butler, infamous author of *Hypercircuit*, makes a welcome reappe arance on the 64 with what must be the shortest name for a computer game ever. *Zed* (or *Zee* as the Americanism has it) is also the first release from Alligata's newly established label, Rino Software. So where does such an unusual title come from?

In the farthest reaches of the galaxy there is planet, so advanced it has a powerful defence system that is totally computer controlled. For many years things ran smoothly with multitudes of aggressors being successfully repelled on a number of occassions. Until one fateful day when something went dreadfully wrong. The computer malfunctioned and was no longer capable of distinguishing between allied and enemy craft. Now someone must destroy the system before it's too late. That someone is you . . . Codename **Z**.

The computer is housed within a control ship somewhere in the fourth dimension. This can only be reached by firstly battling through three other dimensions, inhabited by all manner of computer controlled nasties. Well, **friendlies** really as they were on your side before this little mishap occur red. There are three ships at your disposal and each has a limited energy supply that is depleted on ramming or hitting anything hostile.



These sort of 3D games are all the rage at the moment, and I love them. Ever sine Time Pilot 84, Starforce *and* Nova *hit the arcades there has been a distinct bias towards the 3D bas-relief effect on anything possible. Z itself has brilliant graphics and plays very similarly to* Hyper Circuit. *The only realy moan about the game is the lack of extra lives. This shortens play considerably and · also cuts down on those massive scores. Apart from that it's ace and will definitely take several sessions to crack. I'm really glad shoot em ups are coming back into fashion (if they ever went out) and Z is certainly one of the better ones.*

The zones consist of a multi-directional, multi-screen, wrap-around playing area with a central transporter unit. This device is used to teleport to the next zone, but first the surrounding protective barrier must be penetrated. Energy Pods are occasionally released and contain capsules that when collected, form bombs capable of holing the barrier, thus allowing access to the teleport and further levels.

Initially there are many Defence Ships that attempt to hinder progress. Each follows an individual movement pattern and frequently release mines. On the second level there are evasive Flying Saucims to contend with as well, while on the third the aptly named Big Mothers make an appearance. These require ten hits to destroy them and have the nasty habit of releasing homing mines that cannot be disposed of and must be evaded. Meteorites are common to all dimensions and follow a predictable pattern, making them easy to destroy. The Control Ship itself though, has to be shot with five energy bombs before it is eradicated for good. And even then the planet will only temporarily be at rest as the whole thing starts over again, only at an increased level of difficulty.

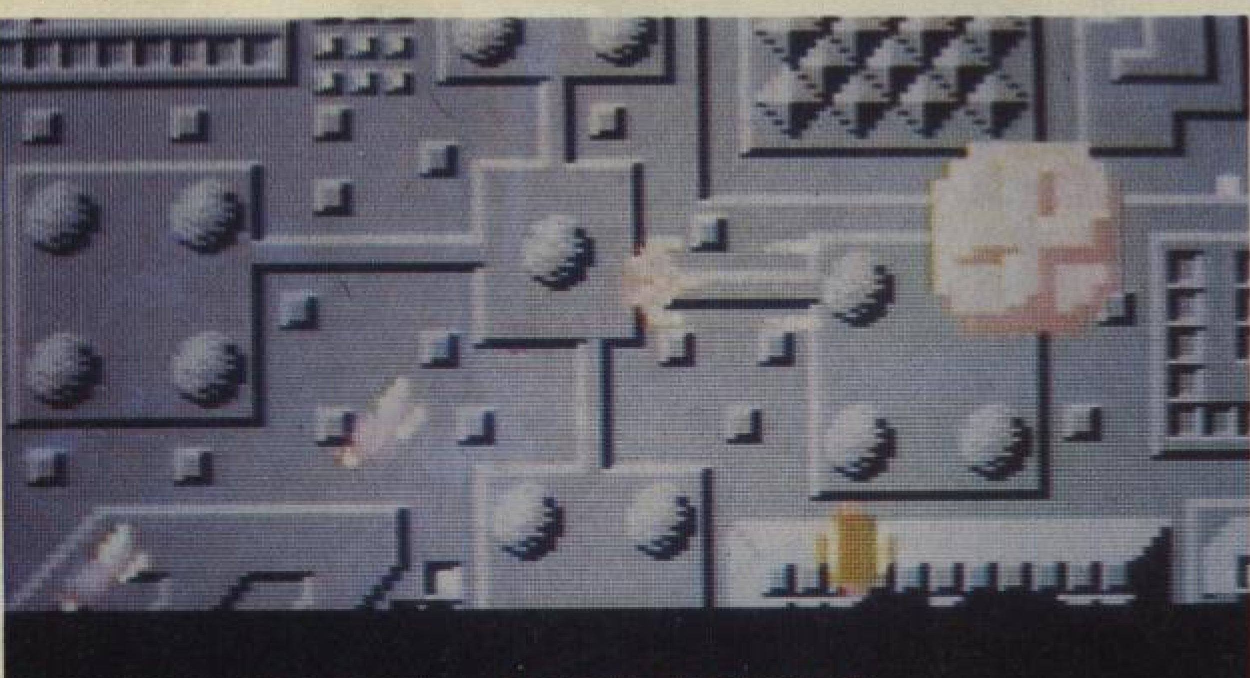




I was a great fan of Chris Butler's previous work, Hypercircuit, *which consisted of little more than mindless, but enjoyable, blasting. Z is of a similar ilk with a few similarities in play and is as much fun as its predecessor. Graphically the game is of near arcade standard with some brilliant backdrops, especially the lunar surface in the third dimension. The sound effects are suited to the game and add to the atmosphere of a fast, frenetic, high quality shoot em up such as this.*



This shoot em up is immediately impressive. Press fire and before you know it you're zooming smoothly over an extremely pretty backdrop. Well to be accurate I suppose the backdrop's moving under you, seeing as how your ship stays central. Although the attacking aliens are exceedingly vicious, they too are of a very pretty nature. The game is great fun to play and the excellent inertial control of the ship makes things very realistic. Z is virtually flawless in its execution and Chris Butler looks like someone who's going to go far.



Presentation 92%
Few options but excellent demo/instructions feature within the program

Graphics 96%
Brilliant, arcade quality scrolling backgrounds and sprites.

Sound 69%
Some competent and unusual sound effects.

Hookability 93%
All the addiction of a great shoot em up.

Lastability 87%
Plenty of zapping to keep itchy trigger fingers happy.

Value For Money 85%
Like having an arcade machine in your own home, only considerably cheaper.

Overall 88%
One of this years better blasts.



LORD OF THE RINGS
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RUPERT AND THE ICE PALACE

Quicksilva, £7.99 cass, joystick or keys

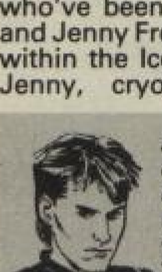
Though not officially credited, it seems fairly certain that Task Set, in some form or other, have scripted Rupert's latest adventure. Anyway Rupert has now reappeared after his near scrape with death and the Evil Toymaker. This time our chum, who's done more for golfing trousers than Sevvy Blisterous, is playing the hero in trying to release his friends who've been captured by Jack and Jenny Frost and imprisoned within the Ice Palace. Jack and Jenny, cryogenic specialists, have frozen Rupe's pals and they can only be brought back to the real (?) world by the touch of Rupert's yellow furred paw.

Each screen is presented in a very similar format to those in Rupert's previous exploits. The main action takes place in the top three quarters of the screen while a status section, detailing your progress to date, is on the bottom. Rupert starts at the bottom left hand side of the sheet and must reach one of his chums, situated at the top. To reach a friend our favourite yellow bear must negotiate a set of tricky platforms and several nasties in the process. When a chum is freed, his face is put into one of the four boxes on the status section and Rupert escorts them back to Nutwood cottage.

Throughout the sheets you are plagued by the inhabitants of the Ice Palace, minions intent on keeping the residents of Nutwood in deep freeze. Luckily for Rupert he has a supply of ice pills to protect him from the subzero powers of the icy nasties. Unfortunately the supply is limited to four pills and after four touches from a frosty foe Rupert decides he's had enough and it's game over. Throughout the screens the main point to watch for is to avoid icicles falling from a melting roof. The bigger the icicle the less ice pills you are left with if it scores a direct hit.

Control of Rupert is virtually identical to that in *The Toymaker's Party* with the same jumping action, but this time he can duck. Both jumping and ducking prove incredibly handy on later screens when a mutant snowman with an evil grin does his best to top you by throwing deadly snowballs in your direction. If Rupert is hit and is unfortunate enough to be standing on a top platform then he's sent tumbling gracefully back to earth. Other hazards worth watching out for are the icy patches on the floors of some screens, very similar to those that break so many old biddies' bones over the yuletide season. These patches send Rupert into a slide should his feet touch them. Apart from robbing you of ice pills, bumping into an Ice Palace minion also sends you bouncing off to the left or right and more often than not you end up hitting another minion.

Once you've filled the four boxes in the status section with rescued pals it's onto a further four screens, only this time you have to collect clothing scattered about the screen before rescuing one of Rupert's buddies. This means finishing eight sheets to free all four friends for good.



Although Rupert and the Toymaker's Party had really excellent graphics it suffered from being rather easy and a little bit tedious. The latest Rupert game has even better graphics and is even easier than the last! I went through the first six levels and rescued all Rupert's friends on my second go, after that you have to rescue the friends again, only in a slightly more difficult scenario. There's no real variations in the screens, they're all just pretty platforms. It's a shame that such an attractive game should be so tedious, perhaps Quicksilva could add a little more gameplay variation to the next Rupert game?



I'm not sure at which age group the Rupert games are aimed, but as far as gameplay goes they seem to be fit for the younger player. As with Quicksilva's previous Rupert release the graphics and sound are of a high standard, especially the former. The backdrops are beautifully defined as are the sprites and the game has a very pleasant appearance. Unfortunately Rupert and the Ice Palace *isn't so interesting to play as it is to look at. Hopefully Quicksilva will try something new with our furry friend in his third game rather than repeating themselves as they have done with his second.*



I'm afraid Quicksilva's latest release is just as bland as their last. The graphics, once again, are very pretty indeed but the game structure just belongs in the stone age of design. The different sheets don't offer very much in the way of challenge and after a while the compulsion to see the next screen soon dies. There is some frustration appeal since the game really works against you, when getting killed everything is reset. An annoying feature is the inability to start anywhere but the first screen. Overall a poor release with an amazing potential that seems to have been overlooked.

Presentation 76%
Really pretty attract mode but no options.

Graphics 88%
Big, beautiful, detailed sprites and backgrounds.

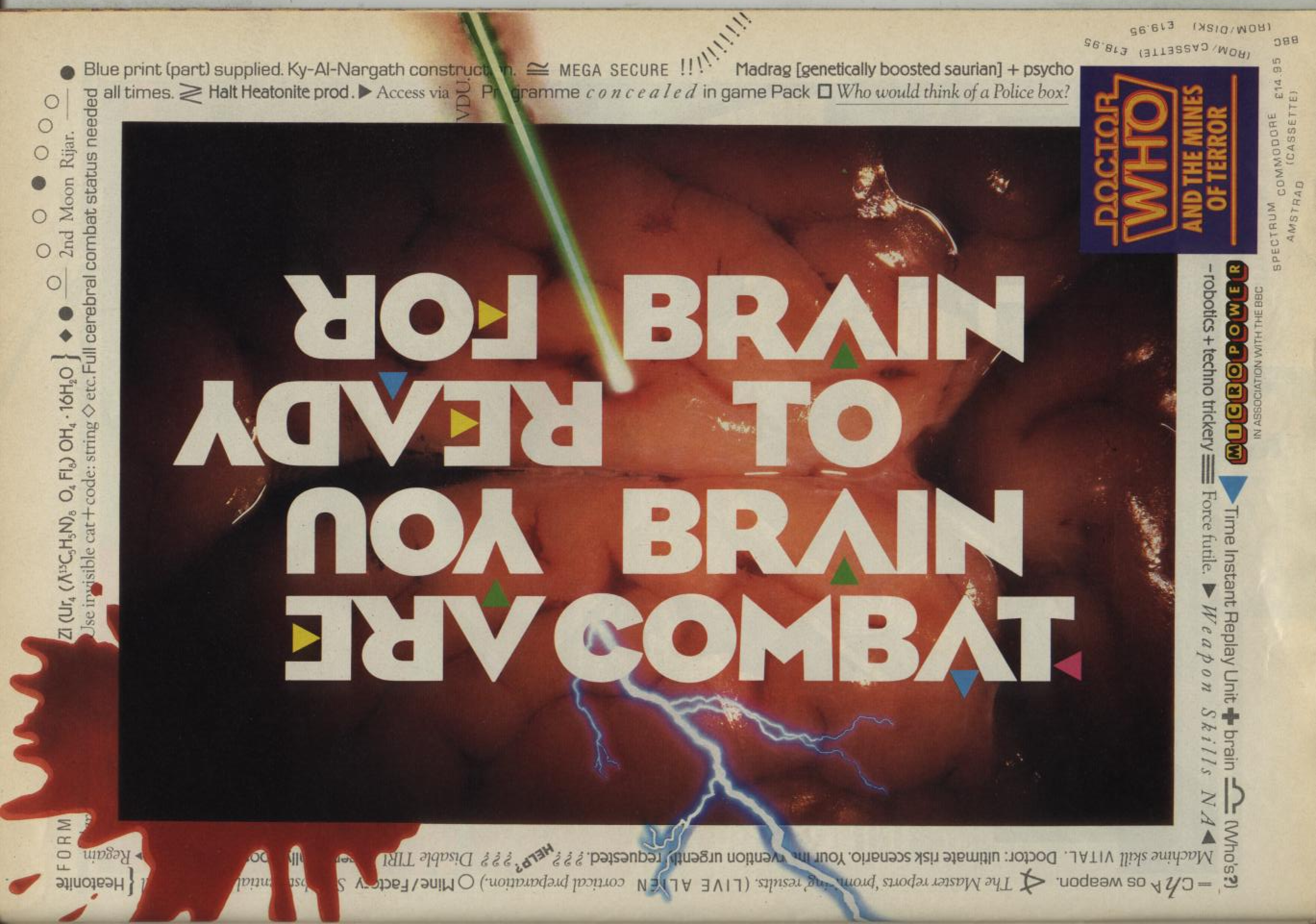
Sound 75%
Lots of very good little jingles.

Hookability 55%
Very easy to get into as it's so simple.

Lastability 48%
All the screens are basically the same.

Value For Money 48%
A pretty, but extremely basic game.

Overall 55%
Graphics and sound maketh not a game.

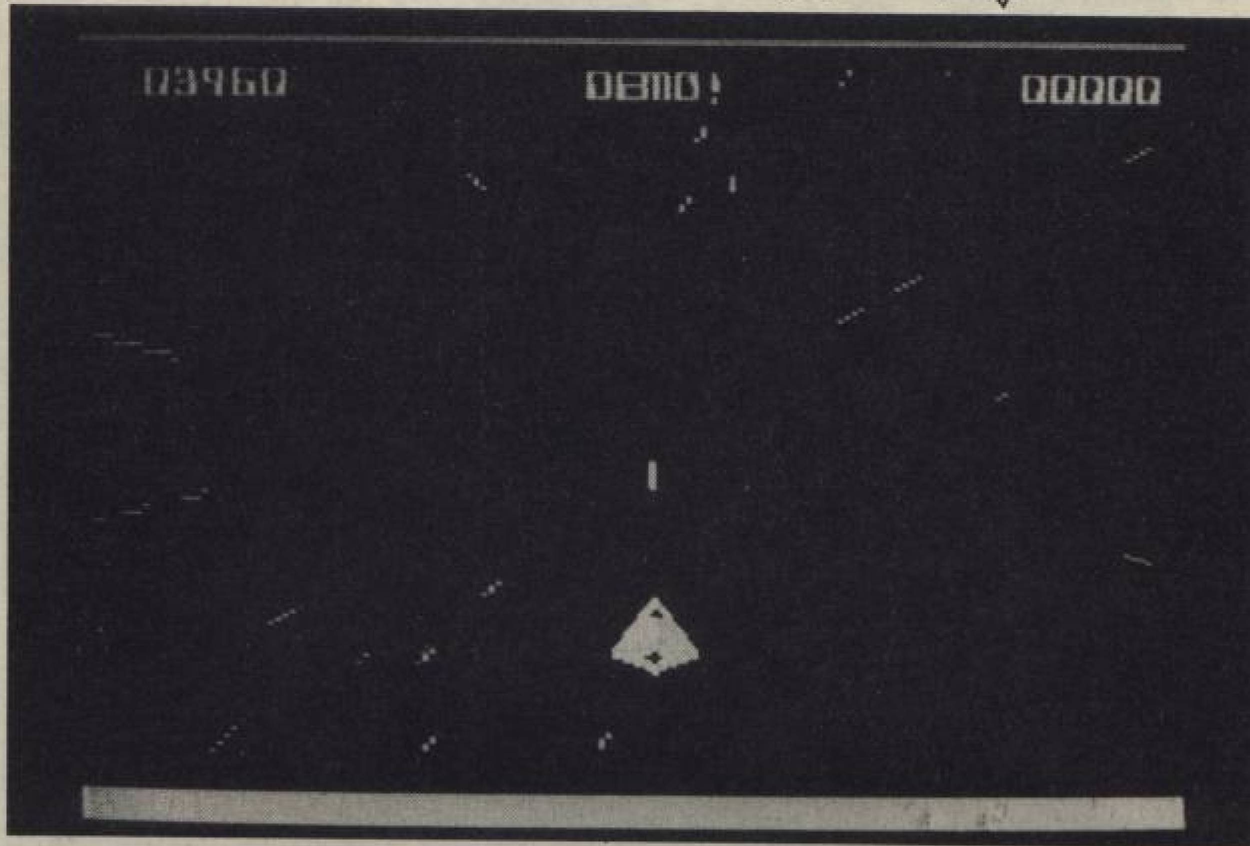


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This is really good uncomplicated shoot em up, it's main appeal being in its classic mindlessness. The program is actually a derivative of an obscure arcade game called Mad Planets. *The control over the ship is superb with the right amounts of inertia and momentum to make things realistic. A real pull for this game is the music, yet another classic Rob Hubbard creation adding intense atmosphere to the overall effect. Although* Crazy Comets *is just a plain old shoot em up, I'm glad to see its type reappear again. Well done Martech.*



CRAZY COMETS

Martech, £7.95 cass, joystick only

Crazy Comets is a conversion from the brilliant, but rarely seen arcade game *Mad Planets*. It's a shoot em up in the first degree with no game objective other than to stay alive for as long as you can by blasting everything in sight out of sight.

The scenario is thus. The Universe is out of control and is contracting into chaos. Matter is turning into energy in a chain reaction of disorder. Sounds pretty dire doesn't it? Not to worry though — all you have to do is destroy anything that wings your way and save the day.

The game is played in space on a single screen and you have a rapid-firing space ship capable of moving anywhere on the screen to repel what is thrown at you. When you begin a game demented, planets come hurtling from the side of the screen at high speeds. They start off small and, if not shot quickly, grow into huge great spinning planets which need to be shot many times before they blow up. A small planet only requires one shot once to destroy it, but as they get bigger they can absorb more laser fire, consequently destroying them before they grow too big is very important.

There have been quite a few 'straightforward' shoot em ups released on the 64 recently and Crazy Comets *is a welcome addition to this category (perhaps the age of shoot em up has returned, but then did it ever leave)? The music is the most appealing aspect of the program and lends an excellent atmosphere to an otherwise average game. It's probably Rob Hubbard's best piece to date, being marginally better than the Monty music. Graphically the game has some superb touches but as is the case with the gameplay, there is little in the way of variation. Still,* Crazy Comets *does offer many hours of mindless and enjoyable blasting and is at a sufficiently low price to tempt many shoot em up fans.*

The planets bounce around the screen pretty fast and they try to home in on you. This is not so simple for them as they can only change direction either by bouncing off the sides of the screen or by following a curve. Still, with three or so of these large worlds bounding about the screen it's very tricky work dodging them.

There are two types of planet — a World and a Nova. A world has sea and land on it and when pumped with enough bullets, explodes harmlessly. Novas on the other hand are pock marked with craters and start getting glowingly angry when you shoot them. This is the danger time because soon after they go completely bonkers and home in after you very fast indeed, leaving only split seconds to shoot them.

This is a neat shoot em up and has some lovely music (Rob Hubbard strikes again). The graphics are ace with several large planets all bouncing about the screen smoothly whilst spinning perfectly. If you look carefully at the world planets you see that they are in fact copies of Earth! The music suits the game perfectly adding well to the game's frenetic qualities. This is definitely in my top five shoot em ups . . . and it's cheap too!

Sometimes a little comet will come on screen — shoot it quickly for it comes after you swiftly if left alone for more than a few seconds. There are also little rockets which usually float out with a comet. Run over these and you receive a 200 point bonus for each one safely 'rescued'.

There are a certain amount of planets which need to be destroyed on every round. Once you've destroyed that number you automatically advance to the next, much harder round. On higher rounds planets appear and grow a lot faster and the little comets hassle a lot more. You earn an extra man every 10,000 points, and you really need them after round ten!



Presentation 71%
Simple attract mode and one or two player option.

Graphics 85%
Superb smooth, large and well animated sprites

Sound 99%
Excellent electro bop that seems to go on for ever . . .

Hookability 89%
The simplicity and difficulty of the game keeps you coming back for more . . .

Lastability 80%
. . . but there's little variety to hold interest for very long.

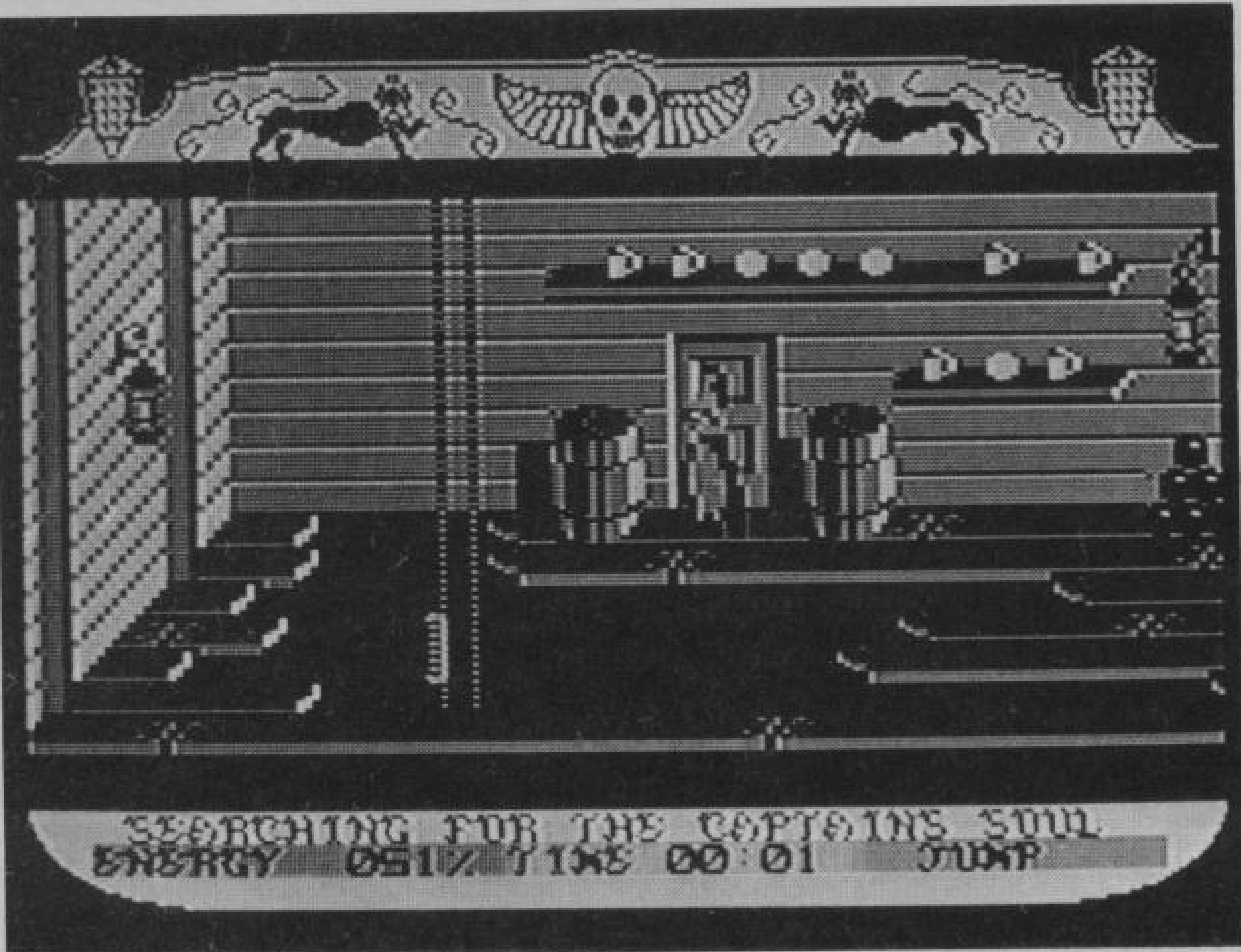
Value For Money 87%
Cheap for such a quality shoot em up.

Overall 84%
Excellent arcade conversion and great shoot em up.



BLACKWYCHE

Ultimate, £9.95 cass, joystick



COMMODORE 64



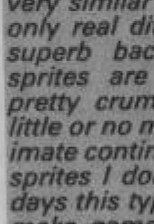
This latest release from the people who play the game, is set on a ghost ship with you, once again, as Sir Arthur Pendragon, trying to free the soul of the ship's captain, imprisoned long ago by the supernatural forces controlling the vessel. In the usual Ultimate tradition there are hundreds of nasties out to stop you, whose touch depletes your energy. You have to find your way through the various decks and rooms and equip yourself for the task ahead (until you find a sword, all you can do is attempt to avoid the nasties by jumping and that isn't very effective).

Actually getting the sword, brings you into contact with a couple of very unfriendly skeletons, so you are well advised to look for a way to replenish that vital energy level. Some of the creatures (and there are an awful lot of them) deplete your supply very quickly indeed and it's advisable to spend the first couple of games looking for new sources of energy.

Most of the problems facing you, require the collection of particular objects to be used in certain other locations. Sometimes their uses are fairly obvious (such as getting gunpowder to fire a cannon) but on other occasions the problems are more obscure. You often need to be in possession of an object to acquire or use another.

The graphics are in full colour and offer forced perspective 3D. This provides interesting backgrounds for the adventure. The monsters who attack are single coloured animated sprites. To list them all here would take too long, suffice to say that many are taken from mythology, rather than being invented for the purposes of the game.

The game isn't over large, as there are only five decks but there are several locations to each deck and some involve scrolling. Of course, the complex graphics and puzzles help make up for the relatively small number of rooms. As usual with an Ultimate game, you're left fairly much in the dark as to what you do. A poem on the game sleeve tells you only the barest details about your quest.



After reading the press release I thought that Blackwyche was going to be something really different and special. Unfortunately it's not. Ultimate seem very content with the Staff of Karnath/Entombed *game format and have used it again in* Blackwyche. *The game itself is very similar to the last two, the only real differences being the superb backdrops. The main sprites are really awful with pretty crummy animation and little or no multicolour. Why Ultimate continue to use expanded sprites I don't know, but these days this type of sprite tends to make games look shoddy and unprofessional in their programming. There are quite a few tricky puzzles to solve and the initial interest is there, but I'm beginning to get that déjà vu feeling and playing a game in this format for the third time round just makes it seem dull and uninteresting.*



I've always thought that Staff of Karnath *was a pretty poor attempt at an arcade adventure, being far too obscure and frustrating to be worthwhile (I'm amazed anyone ever solved it).* Entombed, *while following a similar format to its predecessor, was a much better game with some excellent problems.* Blackwyche *also has some great problems, such as sub-standard sprites, sound effects and poor puzzles. It also looks too close to the two previous Ultimate releases for comfort — when will they buck up their ideas and come up with something new? Hopefully their next release,* Imhotep, *will be a step in the right direction.*



This is one game I just wasn't excited by at all. There might be a lot of different monsters but they all do pretty much the same thing and they all look pretty dull. The 3D effect, which appears to be good at first sight, is out of proportion and frustrating. Blackwyche *looks as if it could have been good and there are some fairly decent ideas, but these have been badly implemented on screen. There is nothing whatsoever remarkable enough to write about. I think Ultimate have made an unfortunate mistake with this one.*

Presentation 65%
Average packaging, nice loading screen but only a couple of options.

Graphics 79%
Stunning backgrounds are all very well but the sprites are quite primitive.

Sound 38%
Weak, unimaginative tunes and FX.

Hookability 45%
There's just not enough rewarding play to grab you . . .

Lastability 47%
. . . and if you persevere it's not even that hard to finish.

Value For Money 48%
The going rate for an Ultimate game but well below their standards.

Overall 53%
Sad to see Ultimate turn out a program like this.



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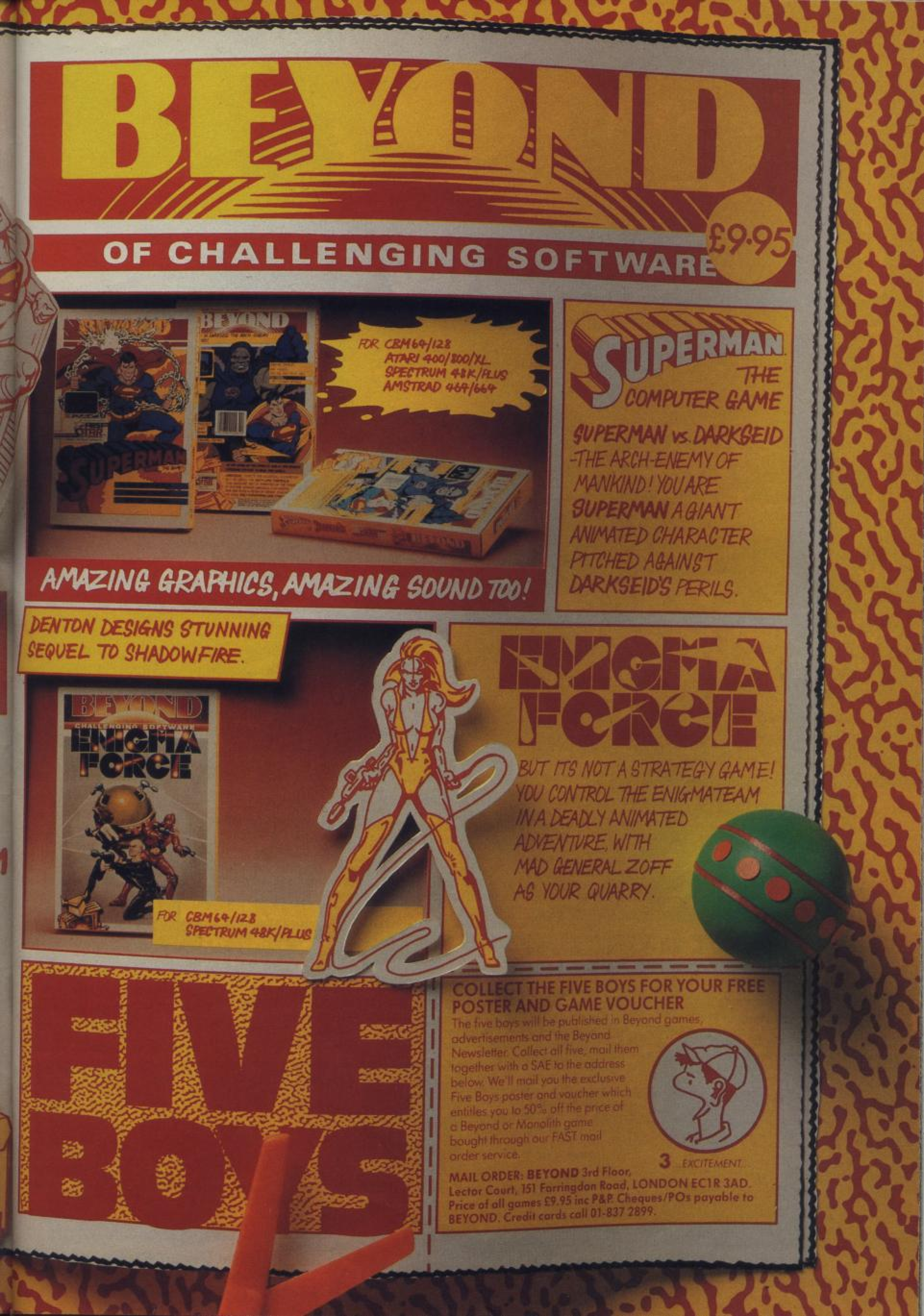
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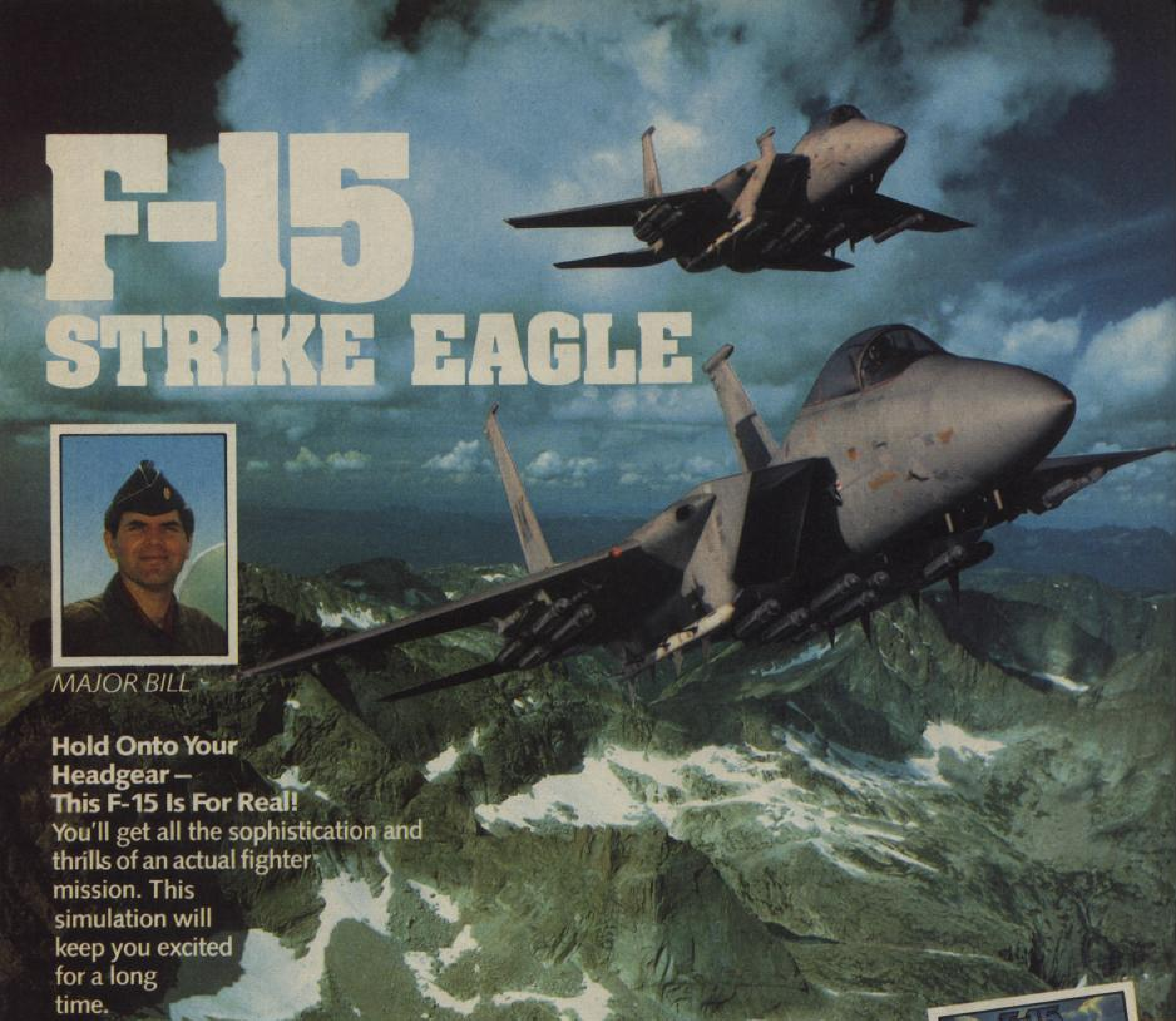


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● Radar	Yes	Yes
● Electronic Counter Measures	Yes	Yes
● Inertial Navigation	Yes	Yes
3. Real Combat Missions	Yes	Yes
4. Developed and tested by Real Fighter Pilots	Yes	Yes
5. Aerobatic Flying (Loops, Splits and Yo Yos)	Yes	Yes

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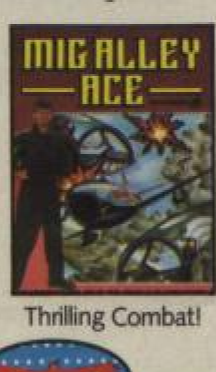
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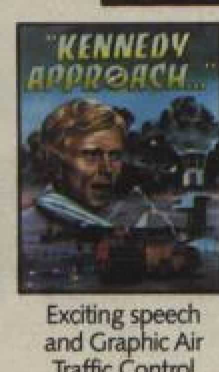
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ZZAP! Flash

N·E·W·S f·l·a·s·h···

THE JOURNALIST'S TAIL

From our journalist correspondent — John Minson
We've all been following the epic struggle of **Andrew Braybrook** and his *Paradroid* Programmer's Log in this humble organ. Now for a new voice — the last link before you, the customer, get your hands on his work. Yes, this is . . .

The Pocket Diary of a Hack
19th September 1985
Stumble from my bed somewhere in London. Something important today . . . of course, Hewson's launch *Paradroid*. The promise of food, drink and a new program lure me out of my hovel.

Here it is, on the balcony above a West End bar; a gathering of the journalistic clans, presided over by Andrew Hewson and brother Gordon who demonstrates the subtleties of droid control and power transfer. Already a rave review in one of the weeklies, it looks like Andrew's efforts have not been in vain.

We eat, drink and make merry as we play the game. I keep my ear to the ground for idle gossip but only get my head trodden on. Finally I catch up with Braybrook, now a nervous wreck from his programming exertions. Could he be suffering from paradroia (oh well, suit yourself)?

He is a happy man, pleased with the product except for one thing. Somewhere in the wilds of Ludlow there is already a super-gamer who can beat him hollow in his own creation. But with a shake of his fist, Mr B vows to make the journey west to challenge the JR who is to high scores what the other JR is to oil. I don't think we've heard the last of this one.

The party's over, the computers return to their boxes and I return to mine, only pausing to scrounge 10p off a passing tourist for a black coffee. It's a dirty job but somebody has got to do it.

'AND NOW — ORLANDO!

We can exclusively reveal that Orlando, renowned BBC programmer extraordinaire, author of *Frak!* and *Zalaga* on the self same machine, is set to release his first game for the Commodore 64, *Fire Track*, 'early next year'. 'It's a game of pure on screen mayhem', said Orlando when questioned about his new venture, 'and is a fully fledged arcade adventure game without the adventure'. Mind you it was 1am in the morning . .

VIRGIN'S CHRISTMAS CHEER





That time of the year is almost upon us once again. The time to 'rejoice', make merry, stuff and drink yourself silly, watch a multitude of repeats on television, that sort of 'thing'. And of course send pieces of cardboard, bent in two, with a humourous little message bidding everybody good will etc etc, wrapped in a sheet of carefully constructed paper to each other. Yes, it's Christmas! So, to celebrate the occasion and do something t. tally different, Virgin have released the first ever computer Christmas 'card'. You can now send your friends a very jolly, fully animated, digitised Yuletide greeting on your 64 for a 'mere' £2.99. I must add that included in the price is a free game, *Ambush*, on the flip side.

Oy! What about Dan Dare *then?* Oh yes. Virgin are at this very moment writing a game based on the legendary Eagle comic star himself. It will feature many of the characters associated with Dan such as his faithful sidekick Digby and his sworn arch enemy the Mekon. The game looks and plays very much like an actual comic strip and graphically it is quite stunning. Having seen some screen shots in a, er , rival mag, all the more aged of ZZAP! staff were wracking their brains to recall whether anyone in Dane Dare ever called Digby 'Diggers' as seen in one shot. We doubted it very much, but Dare Expert Oliver Frey (who used to draw the strip for a while) announced that it was never the case. So, Virgin, better check that one out. Price and date of release are uncertain at the moment.

JUMPING FOR JOY (WELL, FOR SOFTWARE PROJECTS ANYWAY)

World famous show jumping and sign language expert, **Harvey Smith** has been digitally immortalised by **Software Projects** in their new release, *Harvey Smith Show Jumper*. The game features twelve different courses, a few horses (what else?) and a course designer option. It's also been endorsed by Harvey himself and Team Sanyo. Up to six people can compete against each other in a mini tournament and all the rules of show jumping are adhered to strictly. *Psychedelia* fans can also take advantage of the glorious Technicolor protection sheet included in the package. And all for a price of £7.95 on cassette.



US GOLD GETS IT TOGETHER

There's a brand new compilation tape just out from US Gold (it's their first you know) suitably titled the Arcade Hall of Fame. It contains five very popular games and although some of them are getting on a bit, the package represents good value for money. And what are the games? Well, there's *Spy Hunter* (a pretty smart shoot em up and a ZZAP! Sizzler to boot), *Tapper* (fast, frantic, fun, slinging sodas to very thirsty and impatient customers), *Up 'n' Down* (a vertical scrolling dodge em game), *Blue Max* (a sort of *Zaxxon* in a bi-plane) and *Aztec Challenge* (seven screens of Aztec action). Separately the five games retail at well over forty quid but you can buy them together for only £9.95 on cassette and £12.95 on disk. Can't say fairer than that now can you John?

GLOBAL DOMINATION?

Dutch software house **Aackosofts** latest release for the 64 is *Koko*, an arcade adventure set in a large underground cave inhabited by all sorts of nasty individuals. The game is to be marketed in the UK by Global Software of *Magician's Ball* fame (reviewed this issue) and is the first such release. Cost? £9.95 on cassette to you Guv.

N·E·W·S·f·l·a·s·h . . .



A publicity shot for a new Minter game, do we hear you cry? Wrong! This handsome, dashing young sheik is actually Stephen Cargill, programmer of the newest MELBOURNE HOUSE epic, FIGHTING WARRIOR. It's all about sword-waving Egyptians, see, hence the camel (nothing to do with mutants, so there). Stephen is better known, possibly, for his outrageously loud shirts, as we well know, from having to cover our eyes when he appeared on the Newsfield stand at the PCW Show.

FULL HOUSE

Melbourne House have got a busy time ahead of them with no less than six new releases due before Christmas. First there's *Starion*, an arcade game requiring quite a bit more thought than your average shoot em up with 243 zones of blasting and anagram solving. Then there's *Fighting Warrior*, a game in a similar vein to Melbourne House's last arcade release, *Way of the Exploding Fist*. *Gyroscope* on the other hand, has the player guiding (believe it or not) a gyroscope over and down several different vertically scrolling landscapes. That's due out at the end of November and will cost £8.95 on cassette.

Although the successful Spectrum classic *Mugsy* never actually hit the 64, its sequel, quite sensibly called *Mugsy's Revenge*, will in mid-November. It contains graphics and animated sequences of the same high quality as its predecessor and will sell for £8.95 on cassette. Finally *Big Daddy's Rock 'n' Wrestle* is a wrestling game with a difference from the team that brought us *Exploding Fist*. It features music while you play in the form of some heavy rock and with someone the size of Big Daddy that seems pretty apt. A possible mid-November release at a price of £9.95 on cassette. There's also the chance of a full review on one or more of these products next issue so keep em peeled . . .

But you said **six** *games?*
Yeh, the other is *Lord of the Rings* but I think ol' Whitey has probably got something to say about that . . .

ANDERSON BACK IN 64s

Nice to see ex-editor of ZZAP! back in the 64 harness again as 'boss of *Commodore User*'s G FORCE, the team that produces the reviews in the mag. Terrible pity, however, that he couldn't persuade anyone at CU to spell ZZAP! properly, or is this another example of slipping memory? Chis is also proprietor of the new Amstrad mag *Amstrad Action*, the first issue of which spent some time praising the wonders of the machine, but we wonder how many Amsters are aware that he must have forgotten writing in issue 3 of ZZAP!, " **. . . and when that happens the SCAREMONGERS are going to look like a bunch of half-brained, Amstrad-owning WIMPS . . .** " Surprising too, that Chris needs the extra work . . . ?

FREE IAN ELLERY!

CRL's most recent release is not Ian Ellery from the confines of his padded cell, but a new multi-screen, multi-directional scrolling arcade adventure that goes by the name of *Journey*. The game was programmed by Australian software house **Ozisoft** (anyone remember *Space Ace 2001?*) and has the player attempting to bring back 11 treasures from the centre of the Earth. It contains many original features and retails at a price of £9.95 on cassette.

Two other imminent releases are the 'shoot em ups' *Space Doubt* and *Blade Runner*, the latter being a very unusual film 'tie-in', in that the game is based around the Vangelis music rather than the cult film itself.

A BUBBLY BIT

The Commodore version of *Starquake*, effectively the follow up to Bubble Bus' previous 64 conversion *Wizard's Lair*, is nearing completion. The game contains over 400 screens of shoot em up-cum-arcade adventure action and a multitude of original features. It stars a cute little character who goes by the rather non-descript name of BLOB and a large variety of not so cute aliens. Price and release date are yet to be announced but it should be ready before Christmas.

LIBRARY CASE

In issue 6 the Letter of the Month mentioned some problems concerning the Midland Games Library. Following the publishing of this letter the Midland **Computer** Library of Worcester received numerous telephone calls from distressed members. We would just like to confirm that the Midland Computer Library has no connections whatsoever with the Midland Games Library in question.

SUPER DUPER SILVER SOFTWARE

Firebird have three new budget titles on the way: *Thunderbirds* (a game based around the exploits of Gerry Anderson's world famous puppets), *Chimera* (similar to *Alien 8* in appearance but not in play) and *Willow Pattern* (an arcade adventure with Chinese overtones). All will be released under the Super Silver label and retail at a price of £3.50 on cassette.

EXPLOSIVE NEW GAME

Mirrorsoft have recently converted their classic platform game *Dynamite Dan* to the 64 and are intent on releasing it in the near future. It boasts improved graphics and sound over the original, but the gameplay thankfully remains the same. The music was excellent on the Spectrum version, so it should be stunning on the 64 (programmer's a musician chappie or something similar). More positive details next issue.

WOT NO PENDRAGON?

By the time you read this most of you will have no doubt seen the new Ultimate game, *Imhotep*, but still it merits a mention. Price . . . £9.95 on cassette. It should have been released on October 15th but so far we simply haven't seen a copy.

N-N-N-NO-NO-NOVAGEN? THE MERCENARY MYTH?

Don't despair, the latest Novagen classic, *Mercenary*, **will** be released shortly. In fact it should be available by the time you read this. Novagen apologise for the delay, the reason being that the author, Paul Woakes, is cramming in many more new features. As if there weren't enough already. Full review next month?

WHO DARES . . . WINS?

The arcade game *Commando* will be officially bursting onto your screens later this year as Elite have the purchased the rights to perform the translation from arcade to home machine. This is one game that has sparked off quite a bit of controversy (or contra-versy as some newsreaders say) as far as a computer version goes. Alligata first produced a game called *Who Dares Wins* which was in some ways similar to the aforementioned arcade game. Having acquired the home computer rights to convert the arcade classic, Elite decided that Alligata's game was sufficiently similar to the original as to infringe their copyright and so promptly sought and gained an injunction to stop it being distributed. Alligata then had the game re-written and re-released under the title of *Who Dares Wins II* to avoid further hassle and everything now seems hunky-dory. The first sequel without a true prequel, eh?

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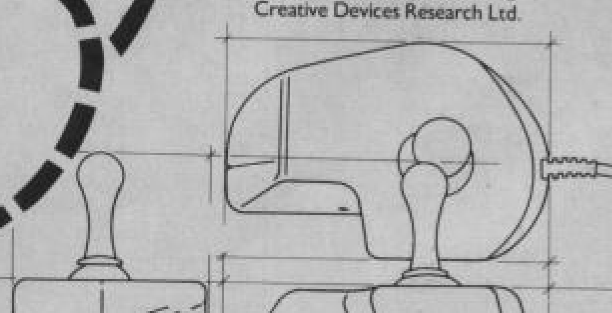
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Here we go with the December issue, makes you think of Christmas, doesn't it? Yet it's only a rather pleasantly warm mid-October day as I write this fascinatingly vital Rrap intro. Such is the way of periodical magazines. If you think that's bad, looking at a schedule at the beginning of a year, that reaches well into the middle of the following year is real depressing!

This month's concerns and obsessions are a mixed bag indeed, although there's little, it seems, that's driving anyone to real letter mania. For the pick of the month, I rather liked this list of essential rules on dealing with Muther Trubble from a reader who lives a long way from Neasden . . .

LLETTER OF THE MUNFTH



SAG . . . SAG?

Dear Lloyd,
G'day, thought I'd drop a line from here down under. I've learnt and mastered the fine art of SAG (sneaking a game) which helps me to deal with muther trubble.

For those in similar plights, here are the official SAG rules to deal with MERCYLES (MuthErs Rules Concerning Your LEiSure). I know that's not how you spell it but it fits.

Rule One — Pretend to be invisible, this includes your joystick.

Rule Two — Keep ALL lights off. A lit lamp is equal to saying 'hey Mum, I'm playing games'. Bulk Uncool.

Rule Three — Always keep your joystick well oiled. To a suspicious mother the creak of a joystick stands out like a fog-horn attached to your datasette.

Rule Four — On your games disk always have something that you can load which meets with your mother's approval, ie Maths for Meatheads or something. You'll know what she likes.

Rule Five — Always look like you haven't been playing a game. So look bored (unless you are a meathead, then look confused). Wipe away the sweat, drop the heartrate etc.

Rule Six — Only play games when your mother isn't looking. This is VERY important and could well be a deciding rule as to whether you are a successful SAGer or not.

Rule Eight — Practice SAGing as often as you can. Remember: a SAG a day means more play.

Time to go now, thanks for your time and I hope you print this letter, there are no doubt needy people out there who need a SAG to live.

Peter Galloway, Weetangera, 2614 ACT, Australia

I'm sure that there are many out there needing your tips, sport, and for your trouble, you get £20 worth of software (I'll get hanged for the postage cost)!!!.

And following that, here's another upside downer . . .
LM



WIZARD OF OZ

Dear Lloyd,
G'day. I'm writing to your from down under here in Oz, to give you some complaints . . . yes, that's right, complaints, but not all about ZZAP!

1) Your mag always gets here about 3 months after it comes out over there, so I always miss out on competitions.
2) I want to subscribe and get the free games but . . . the closing dates are always before I get ZZAPPED.
3)People always hang it on Rockford. So I started up a Friends Of Rockford (F.O.R.) Club to beat those meatheads.
4) My mother thinks it is a great joke to come up to me while I'm playing a game and grab the joystick to stuff me up when I am getting through the second desert with 3 cars and full weapons on *Spy Hunter*, or passing Earth the third time on *Gyruss*

So that is my life story. Keep up the good work.

Jarrod McKay, Croydon, Victoria, Australia

You might think we make these letters up, but who would be so stupid as to invent **G'day** *twice in a row?!! Nope, these are genuine Ozzies okay.*

Sorry about the time lag, this is due to the international distribution system which sends mags by sea, as air freight would be too expensive on such low-priced items. Can't promise anything, but we may, may, be able to do something in the future. Until such time as that happens, there's not really a lot we can do about the competitions, but I will suggest that Subscription deals have an extended 'overseas' period and then it's up to the powers that be . . .

Jarrod says that anyone wanting to talk to F.O.R., the address is: **Friends of Rockford, c/o J McKay 10AS2, Lilydale Technical School, Nelson Road, Lilydale 3140, Victoria, Australia.**

FROM A WRITER OF HYDROGLYPHICS

Dear ZZAP! 64,
I've had enough, your rrap has went from an interesting read to (dare I say it) a political column in the OBSERVER! Between the constant defending, attack, defending, attacking of Jeff Minter and the Great C&VG Controversy, RRap has went to the dogs. In issue one it was an interesting funny read but now it's unbearable due to the number of letters on the subject. Give us back hamsters, mudders, minirave and most of the speccy slaggings. I may be alone in the last request, but I love the degrading of the world's most expensive dunlop guttie (for the uneducated, that means trianer).

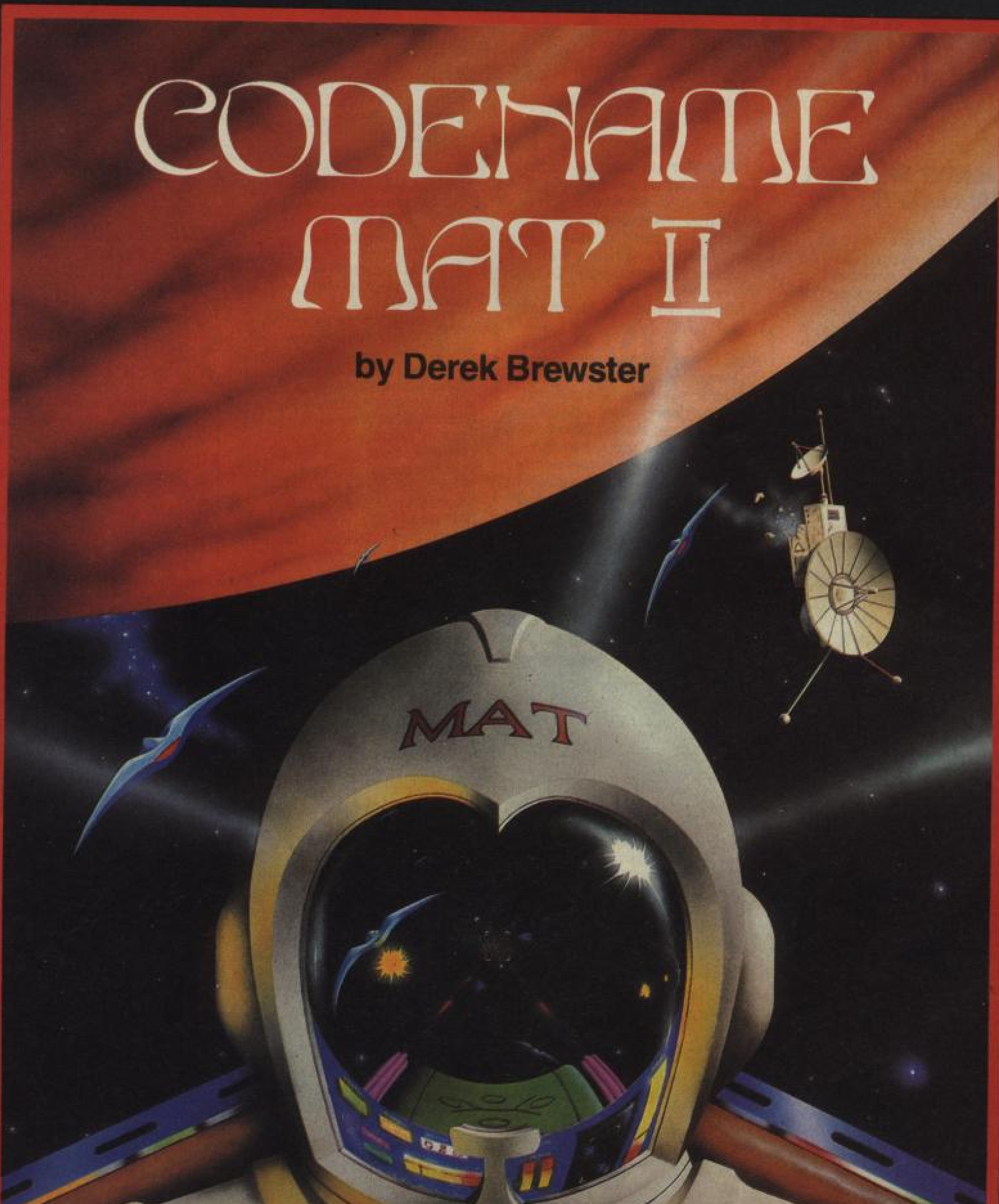
I almost forgot to tell you about my hat, It's a standard 'natural season' baseball cap with ELITE embroidered in white and gold, with the hat being black this gives an excellent effect. I sudjest any commander worth their salt should rush out and make one. I am now 'dangerous' and are only a couple of questions away from the Elite trophy. Two more sudjestions for you — You should have an Elite playoff and (this ones a must) have a THE way of the exploding fist compitition because playing the computer is fine but the real art of the game is head-to-head.

Paul Brady, Armadale, W Lothian

PS If you must print the letter, please do me the courtasy of cleaning up on the spelling. If you don't print it (surprise, surprise) please take to heart the points about Rrap. You know, I was fool enough to think that typing this letter would be easier and neater than my own personal hydroglyphics . . .

Now you know it isn't! I wouldn't dream of cleaning up your spelling — or your grammar — or that quaint punctuation style you exhibit . . . And what exactly are HYDROGLYPHICS? — they sound exciting.
LM

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HAILING MORTAL MAN LLOYD

We are annoyed, nay we are revolting (no jokes please). Do our eyes deceive, we have waited five months in vain hope but the time has come to speak up. This time it is a warning, if this continues we shall act swiftly and fast.

The White Wizard's small but wonderful column is shrinking!!

Me and my thousands of fellow apprentices, elves, dwarves and one tame orc, are amazed. Even the pathetic Scorelord gets the same amount of exposure. I call upon all adventurers worldwide to vent their anger.

'The Mortals must be told.' The man who has baffled and beaten hundreds of evil creatures deserves more. He needs no joystick, no laser gun, just his mind and trusty staff.

Correct injustice now! Or face the consequences!

P Morris, Whitehills, Northants

Hail, revolting dwarven thingy, knowest thou that it taketh a game or six to make a column, and the been few and far a' tween of late. But ol' Whitey's got some nice 'uns for ee this time. Gosh, this is beginning to sound more like my Long John Silver impersonation the longer I go on, so I'll stop it there.

LM

WOT NO CLIMAX

Dear ZZAP!

Tell me it ain't true after buying that 'amazing' game *Wizardry* from my local software shop. I rushed home to play it and after a few weeks I got to this room with an enormous cloud. On searching the fourth level I found a sun burst spell so I went back to the cloud and shot this spell at it. On doing this up came the words in the left hand corner 'well done your quest is over'. No wonderful ending by any means and what happened to the final victory theme?

Andrew Sandle, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex

Can't really help you there, Andrew, I never played it much myself, but perhaps you have to do just a bit better before the ending to get the Victory theme — no??

LM

NOEL, NOEL

Dear Lloyd,

P ease cou d you he p me? I've had my 64 quite a while now and my SHIFT and L keys are getting very unreliable.

I did exaggerate a bit on the first line, but they do make it difficult to type some commands. Nothing important, just LOAD and LIST and some others!

Could you help.

G Monson, East Grinstead, W Sussex

According to Gary 'Mr Untidy' iddon you can purchase a new keyboard from Commodore at an 'amazing y expensive' price. A ternative y you can p onk an o d VIC 20 keyboard on it which cou d we work out a ot cheaper.

M

IF ONLY THEY KNEW . . .

Dear Lloyd,

I order your magazine each month from my newsagent and with the cheapness of the competitions I might stop that. The next best is *Commodore User* and you wouldn't want that would you?

For instance the extra line under the victims in issue six Blade Runner competition. You can tell you've photocopied the bottom picture from the top one and I expect that Oliver Frey has drawn all the differences on the bottom picture.

Is this all you can afford? You must be one of the richest mags. Who types out all the review pages? *Why does he always change to italics where they're* not meant to be. Still, I hope the standard of those type of competitions goes up.

A Anton, Shalford, Surrey

I'm not at all sure of what you are really trying to say. Any Spot the Difference competition is based on two drawings, one of which is a mechanical copy of the other, one of which the artist then slightly alters. This seems so obvious, I can't see why you point the fact out. Never mind, perhaps you know what you mean.

As to being one of the richest mags — well here's another misconception! Mags don't get rich, comapanies that publish mags MAY get 'rich', but most of the profit is ploughed back into new projects — that's how ZZAP! got started in the first place, with money made by CRASH.

LM

BIG BANG SECTION

Dear lloyd,

I have been buying your mag since issue 1 and although I am somewhat older than most of your readers and have two sons, I buy it mainly for its reviews of games. My sons are into arcade games, myself into wargaming, which brings me to the reason that I am writing.

Reviews for wargames that you have done in the past (eg. *Theatre Europe*) have been very good. My complaint is not there, but couldn't we have a special wargames section. A little like your adventure spot. I know wargaming is not as popular as arcade and adventure games, but who is asking for a whole page?

I buy other mags as well as ZZAP! but none of them cover wargaming, so how about starting a trend and give us our own spot.

T Saxon, Swindon, Wilts

Mr Saxon, your every wish is our command! As you can see in this issue, there is a bit more than just a page devoted to wargaming, written by none other than Sean Masterson, our new general in the field, who will be looking after tactics and tiffin.

LM

SUPER COOL

Dear Rockford,

Please tell me one thing, why are you such a cool dude? You are much cooler than that weirdo Rignall. Please could you give me lessons (I'm willing to pay).

A Wally, Christchurch, Dorset

PS Could you please give me any details you know of about *Who Dares Wins*, *Rambo* and Yie Ar Kung Fu

Whose letters column is this anyway? Rockford has nothing to do with my pages, I can assure you. Do 'weirdo' and 'cool' have anything to do with each other, I ask myself? Is there life after death — where do all the old games tapes go when they're thrown off the shelves . . . ? Who Dares Wins *is not being released, but* Who Dares Wins II *is. Could this be the first sequel to come out without a prequel? There are reasons for this which I won't go into (see News Flash).* Rambo *and* Yie Ar Kung Fu *should be out very soon, bt no firm dates as I write.*

LM

HOLLYWOOD ISN'T ALL ITS CRACKED UP TO BE

Dear ZZAP!

I suppose even ZZAP! can't get it right all the time. I refer, of course, to the ultra boring *Frankie Goes to Hollywood* (the game I add, not the group).

Hookability 99%. Is this a joke? So Rignall played it until 4.30am Saturday (he must have started it at 4.20am).

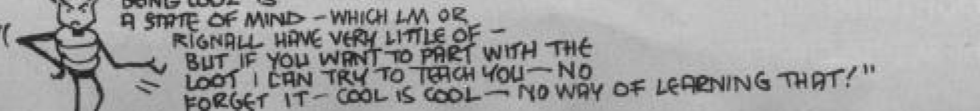
Presentation, Graphics and Sound are all superb, but 97% Overall?! This is a vastly overrated game and after one hour's play I was totally fed up.

On the bright side I bought *Summer Games II* after seeing your review and totally agree with your remarks, although it was obviously reviewed on the disk version because waiting for each event to load is a bit tedious. I bought *Elite* when I saw it was top of the readers' chart — what a great game! 2 out of 3 ain't bad.

P Clark, London E3

Summer Games II *was reviewed from the disk version, and yes, you're right about the loading times. Still, it's kinda worth it in the end. As for* Frankie, *I can't say I agree with you at all, but then — isn't that what makes life so exciting, that none of us can agree with anyone else? Isn't that how wars are started, or something?*

LM



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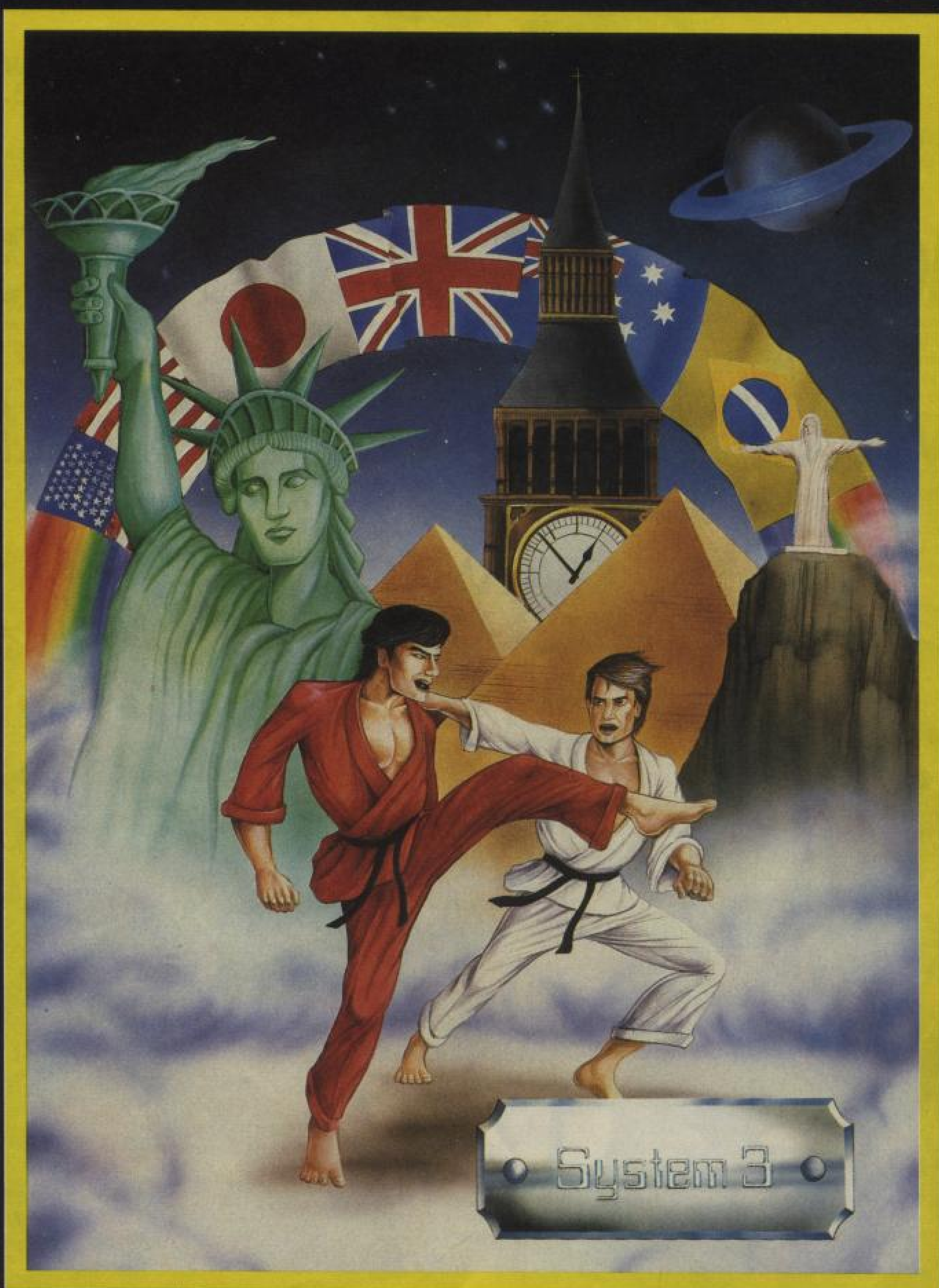
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POWER OF LOVE

Dear ZZAP!
I would like to press some opinions on you. Firstly I commend you on reviewing a wide range of software and reviewing it fairly.

However, I would like to complain about the 'Frankie' wordsearch; one word to find was OF, but I have now counted four OFs in it.

I have really enjoyed reading Birth of a Paradroid, and after reading the *Spy vs Spy* review, bought it and am now looking forward to getting *Spy vs Spy II*.
R Finch, Tamworth, Staffs

Those weren't many opinions! The wordsearch was supposed (have another look at it) to read POWER OF LOVE, but instead it became a trick question (thanks to 'Art'). However, how many of you were able to spell it properly?
LM

JUST WHAT DOES HE THINK HE IS?

Dear Ed,
I've just been wading through a pile of natural history books, but I can't find anything on this fantastic superstar. The question is of course — what is Rockford? Is he an intelligent ant or a flightless bee with arms? Please can the ZZAP! team or Rockford him/herself tell me?
Jaffa, Billericay, Essex



I'll tell you what he is . . . Apart from being a pain in the *(cont on page 202)* *he's a conceited, despicable, egotistical little primadonna. For further information, write to F.O.R., c/o J McKay . . . . .*
LM

DO THIS, DO THAT

Dear Lloyd,
Firstly (for the last one or two issues) where the heck have the 'tackies' gone. Are all the software houses suddenly above tacky? If *Shoot em up* isn't what is?

Also in issue six on the *Cylu* review page 26 the cover of the inlay card is for the 48K Spectrum, why not 64?

Could you put all the Sizzlers in colour. It gives a much better quality look.

Where was the Gold Medal in issue six? I want a gold medal every issue.
Alun Jones, Kettering, Northants

Who needs Tackies anyway? Can't you read a rating straight? Something wrong with your eyesight Alun? Why rub it in when a nasty percentage does it just as well. We're here to support the industry not destroy its morale you know. We would always put the Sizzlers in colour if all the games arrived at the right time, but they don't, and that makes it difficult when all the colour sections have gone off to the printers. As for Gold Medals — well you just can't have one every issue and that's that! It says so at the front of the magazine. Gold Medals are awarded on merit, and if there's nothing that quite deserves one, then there is an issue without. By the way, someone lost the 64 cover for Cylu *— can't win em all.*
LM

'A COMPLAINT'

Dear Editor,
Not long ago I was reading your magazine on a bus on my way home from school. On flicking past your results page I came across something that angered me enormously, something that made me blush with shame — it was (dare I say it) — **A CARTOON.** Quickly I folded away the magazine and hid it in my bag. Luckily nobody saw such childish material. Surely this has annoyed others like me who are insulted by this trash which we don't expect to find in a COMPUTER magazine. From now on remember we want a computer mag, not a comic. (If we did we would buy the Beano, 'cos it's cheaper. So please, no more cartoons.
M J Sweet, Chatham, Kent

Sweet by name — hardly by nature however. The Terminal Man is great, and it's painfully obvious you haven't read it, otherwise you wouldn't call it 'childish'. As for comparing it with the Beano — how daft can you get! Have you seen the Beano recently and compared it with The Terminal Man? Do they look even remotely alike? I don't think so. Another thing, what's all this we business — do you really imagine you speak on behalf of all ZZAP! readers. You must be a big-head if you do . . .
LM
*The Terminal Man is fab-***JR**

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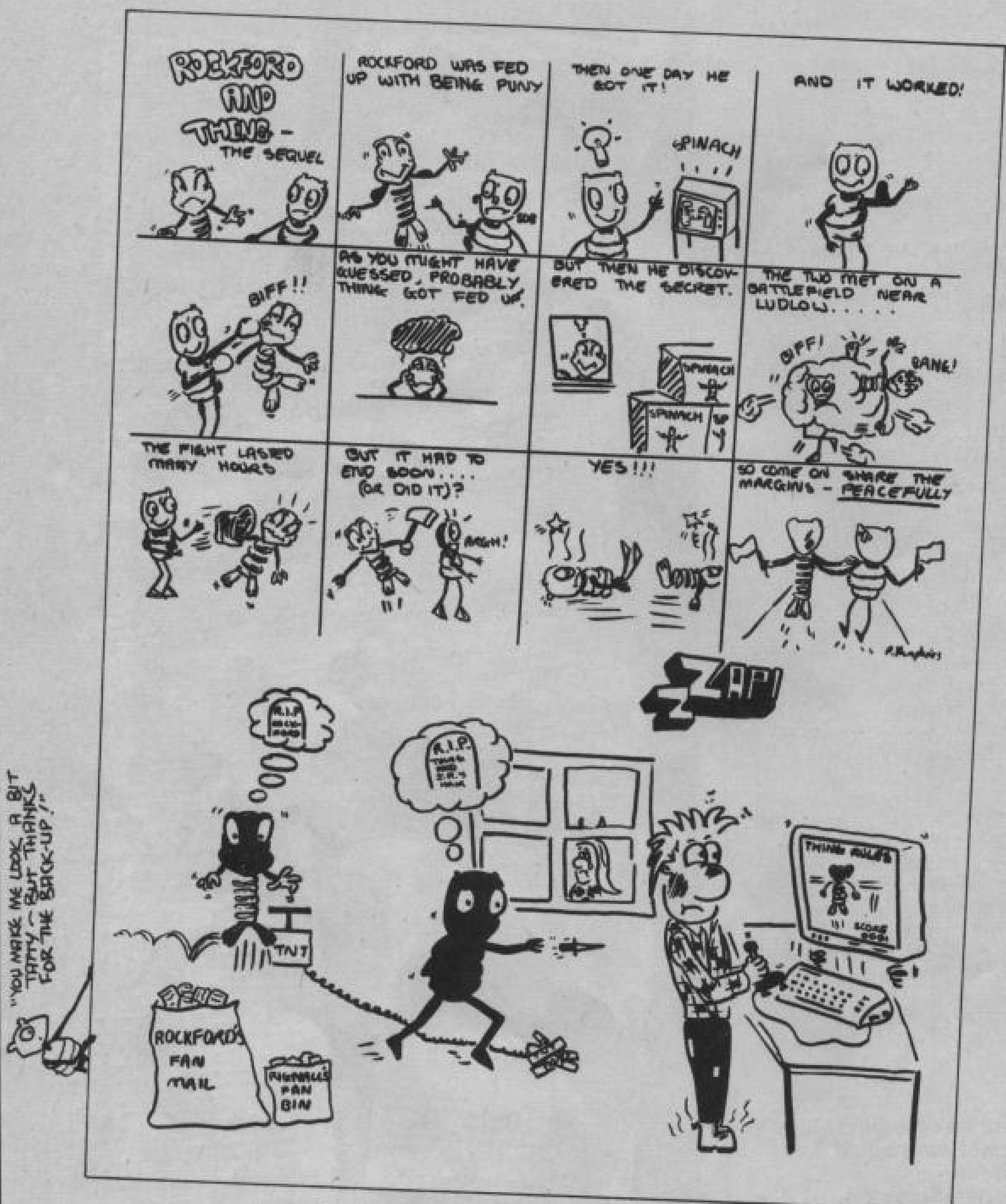
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ZZAP! RRAP



PAUL HUMPHRIES, from Sittingbourne, Kent, had his own comment to make on the awful war between the margin midgets Rockford vs Thing. So strongly did he feel, that he sent in this comic strip (with apologies to the correspondent who thinks we're turning into the Beano)..

TINY TAILS

Dear ZZAP!
I'm not trying to be a nit-picker, but on page 76, line 21, in brackets, is a question: 'Do moles have tails?'

The answer is, YEP, they do, but they're only minute, itsy bitsy, teensy weensy things. Have you been to Kidderminster, as it is near Ludlow? Well 30 miles.
James Bird, Kidderminster, Worcs

I hate to be a nit-picker, James, but Kidderminster is 31.673 miles from Ludlow, and yes, most of us have to pass through it on the way to the great metropolis of B'ham. However, if we really want a thrilling evening out at the cinema, we go to Bridgnorth. Okay?
LM

DESTRUCTION IS FUN

Dear ZZAP!
Having seen two other reviews of *Racing Destruction Set* in magazines that I won't mention, I have noticed that you are the only ones to give it a decent rating. I love the game and think that it deserved every bit of the 95%. I didn't love it on my first 10 goes but grew into it. So far as I can see it is spot the magazine which plays the games a lot.
Graham Swain, Winchester, Hants

The trouble, often enough, is getting them to write about anything by the time they've finished playing the damned things...
LM

ONE OF THE MANY, MANY

Dear ZZAP!,
At this moment in time I'm seriously considering buying a Spectrum again. In early August I wrote off to you about switching off the tape recorder on *Hyper Sports* to hear an extended version of the music before Chariots of Fire. In this month's edition I read on the tips page the same information I gave you so where's my name? Some of the other tips had names on so where's mine?
J Wilkes, Handsworthwood, Birmingham

This is an age-old complaint which often crops up. You were amongst the many who sent in that same tip so consequently no names were mentioned because it would be unfair to do so. Only exclusive mega tips get a mention. Now if you were to send in unlimited energy pokes on Scarabaeus *that would be another matter.*
LM

BARGAIN BASEMENT

Dear Lloyd,
I am replying to Guy Harris's letter in issue 6. Okay, he might have the best deal all year round, but my computer shop has easily the best deal. Every so often the computer takes all the games that have been off the shelves too long and reduces their prices to as little as £1, but never more than £3.50. This generally happens about two or three times a year. For example I got *Eureka!*, game priced at £15 for £3.
Vincent Wildman

Sounds like a good deal — but what's all this about the computer? Don't you have humans running your local computer shop, or are the machines really taking over? One thing you may not consider when it comes to cut price games, is the saddening effect on the programmers. How would you like to see something you had slaved over for months reduced to a mere £1? Shame on you!
LM

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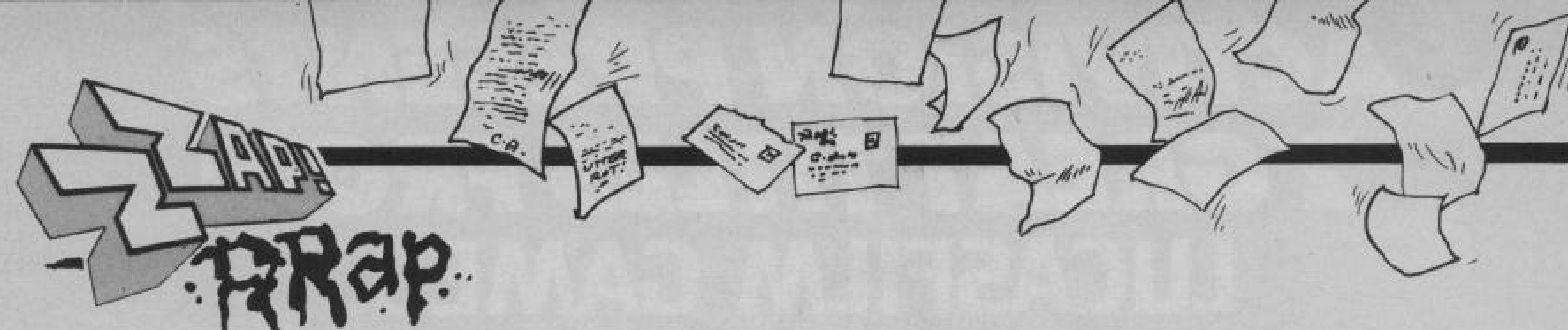
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ZZAP! RRAP

A GREAT WEE SCOT SHOP

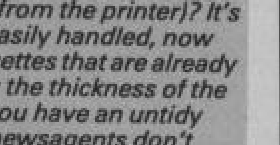
Dear ZZAP!
I'm writing (typing) to you to tell you about a great little shop in Glasgow and to ask you a few things about your almost perfect mag.

Firstly though, in CRASH there are usually a large number of maps in each issue and most of them are brilliant (the *Knight Lore* map for example), so why are the maps in ZZAP! a load of junk (like the *Rocket Roger* map). I am too embarassed to show my friends who own Spectrums (soon getting 64s, do not worry) your mag because they have great maps all over their bedroom walls. Is this what you really want?

Back to the shop. While I was reading through an old issue of C&VG (I don't buy it any more, honest) I noticed an ad for a mail order discount software shop called Unitsoft. It is AMAZING. I bought *Elite* there for £5 off the normal price and I got free posters. They get games in much faster than the bigger shops and the people who run the shop know a bit about games, which is more than can be said about the average high street assistant!

Is there any chance of a demo tape on the cover of your mag this Christmas, a bit like the old PCG (**AAAAAGH! LM**) mega gift last year?
James Thomson, Glasgow

We base most of our maps on the ones you readers send in (no time to do our own)! Make up your own minds about that one. . . No way, no way, no way. There is absolutely NO CHANCE that Newsfield will give away a 'mega' 'gift' of which only half the games load. But the real drawback is distribution of the magazine. Have you ever seen a bundle of 50 ZZAP!s (the way they come from the printer)? It's bulky but easily handled, now add 50 cassettes that are already three times the thickness of the mag, and you have an untidy mess that newsagents don't much like (they keep falling off the shelves. And on top of that, sticking a dirty great cassette (or anything for that matter) on the cover, ruins it.
LM



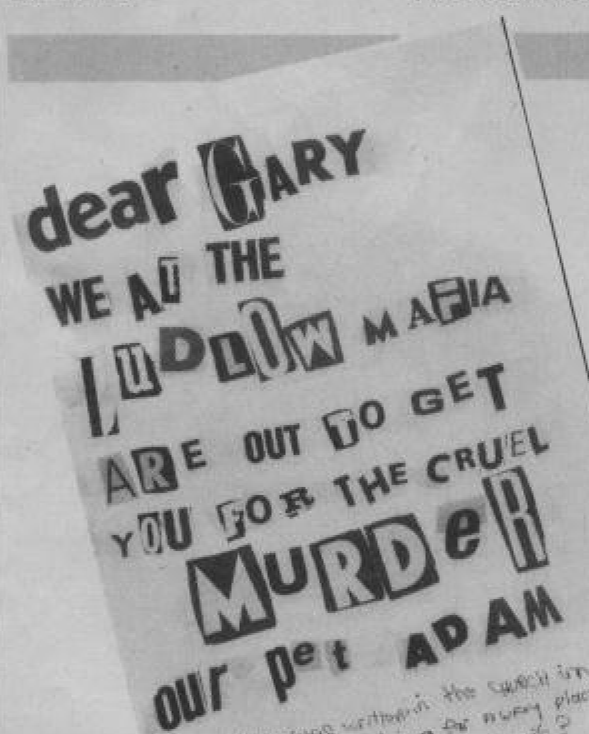
IT'S A RIP OFF

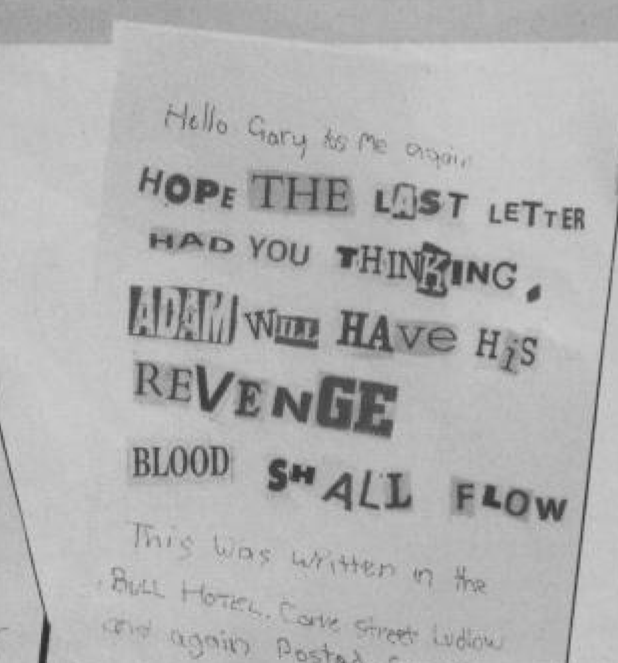
Dear ZZAP!
I'm writing about certain companies who are out to rip off the innocent gamesplayer, despite their games being good. Take a look at a 'certain' advert, it's offering the same game for the Spectrum, Commodore and Amstrad. Fine, but how come for each one the price goes up one pound? This clearly shows they assume the price of the machine is related to the price of the game. So Amstrad owners have spent up to £450 for their machine? Slap a couple more quid on! Make em pay — they must have lots of money, as they could afford that computer! How ridiculous!

Imagine if I bought a record player for £400 and Bert, next door, got a cheap one for £50. Do the record companies charge him £3.99 for a record and me £5.99? No!

You might think it's because records can be played on any machine, whereas games have to be CONVERTED. So? The time it takes for a conversion, when the game is already written, surely must take less time and money, than it took to program the original. So perhaps the conversion takes up more memory and so uses more programming time, hence a higher price? So how come, then, the Amstrad and the 64 both have 64K, and how come (as often happens) a game for the Spectrum 48K is converted straight, using no more memory, yet at a higher price? There is no excuse for it except for greed.
Name and address parted company!

Sorry about losing the last page! But whoever you are, I'm afraid your two arguments here are shot through with holes. For a start off, the price of software **is** *generally related to the machines, not to their price, but to the numbers which have been sold. It's a straightforward and very common market factor — the more of something you can sell, the cheaper it can be, and there are far more Spectrums out there than Commodores, and more Commodores than Amstrads. The cost of conversions varies greatly depending on the complexity of the work to be done. You patently know little about the respective memories of Commodores, Amstrads and Spectrums. Don't be fooled by the difference between 48K and 64K. Several Spectrum games have not been converted to the 64 because there's not enough usable memory in the 64 to cope* — Dun Darach being a good example. Being annoyed with software companies is one thing, getting your facts straight is another.
LM


dear GARY
WE AT THE
LUDLOW MAFIA
ARE OUT TO GET
YOU FOR THE CRUEL
MURDER
OUR PET ADAM
This letter was written in the church inn — in Ludlow, and posted in a far away place. What's next?

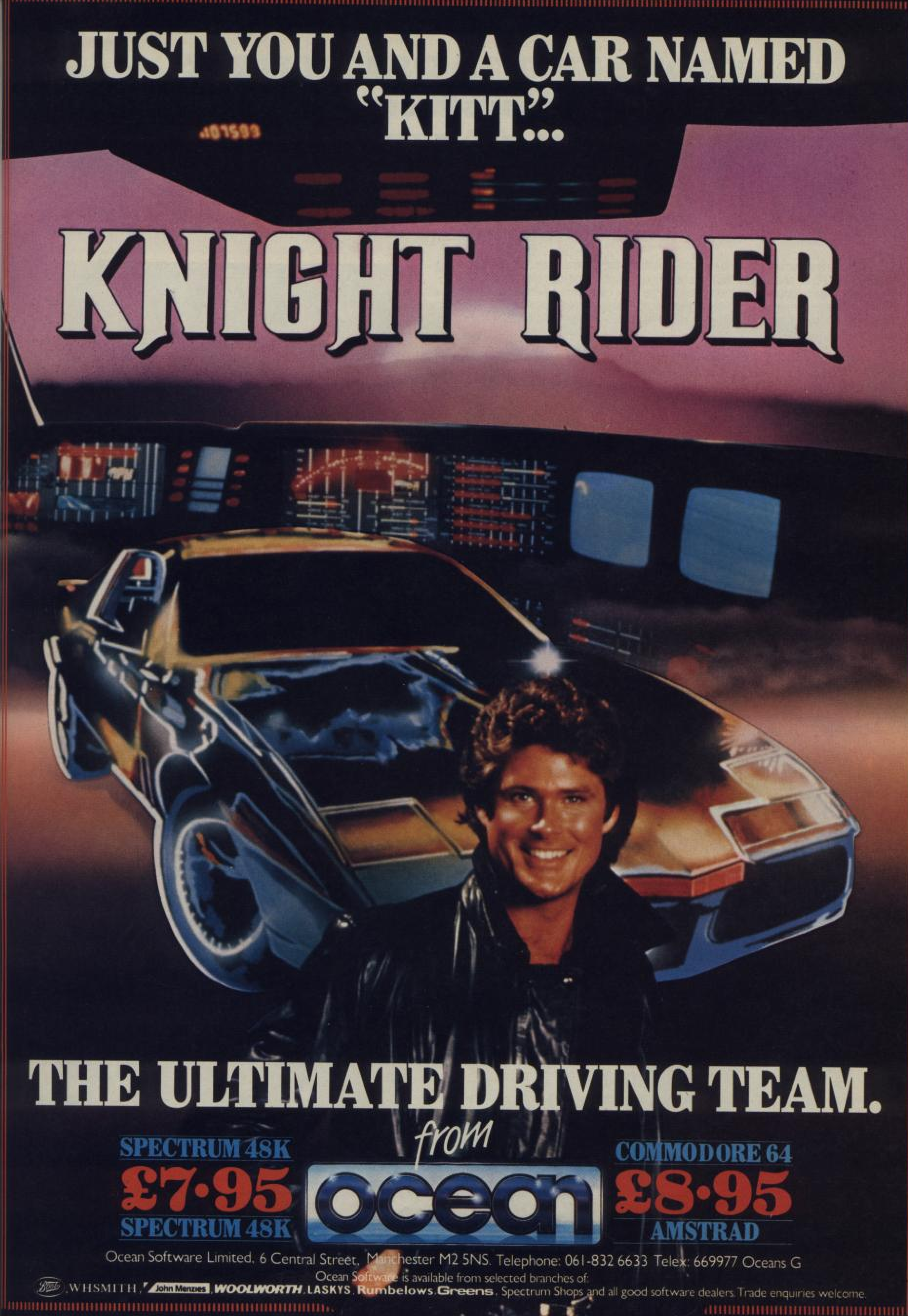

Hello Gary its me again
HOPE THE LAST LETTER
HAD YOU THINKING,
ADAM WILL HAVE HIS
REVENGE
BLOOD SHALL FLOW
This was written in the Bull Hotel, Corve Street Ludlow and again Posted far Away
By Watch your Shadow
Ludlow Mafia

TO PENN FROM THE POISON PEN

Poor Gary Penn, since confessing to the murder of Adam, the world's first pet person in captivity, he's been under a lot of pressure from various sources, but the most worrying has been the local Ludlow Mafia. We have no firm evidence of their identities but circumstantially, it may well be that Gordon Druce (ZZAP! production dept) may know something that could aid in our investigation. I say no more, but present the evidence to date, these two cowardly threats that arrived at ZZAP! Towers . . .
LM

That just about wrraps up for this month. Don't worry about Gary — he's a big boy and can look after himself (look at the cool way he handled Adam), childish threats from the local mafia phase him not one bit.

Keep the letters coming, using the address: ZZAP! RRAP, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB.



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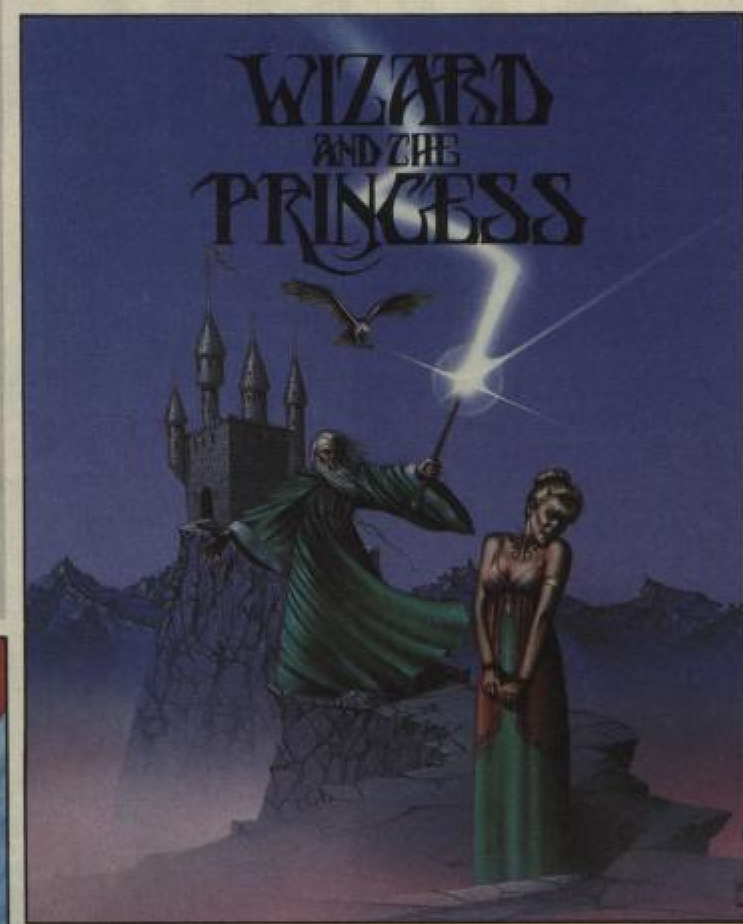
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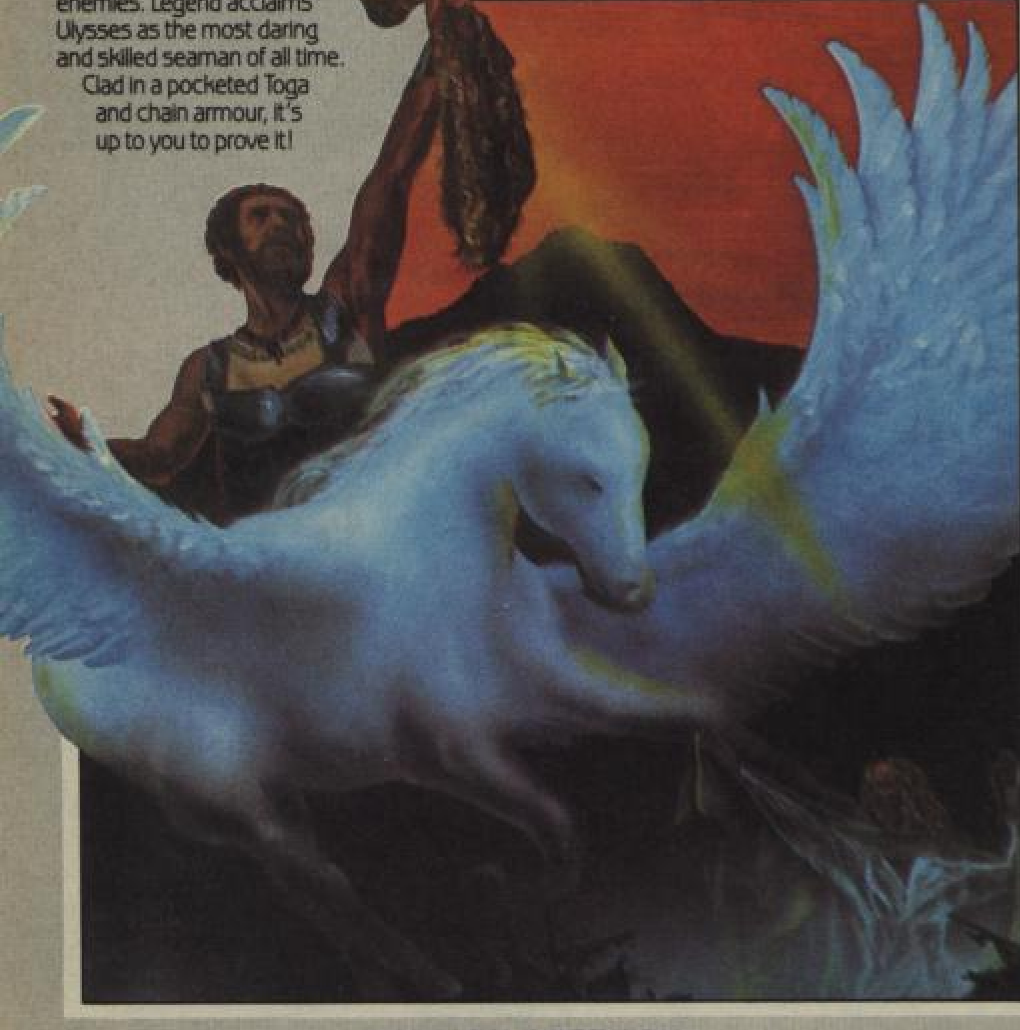
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A-ZOIDING WE WILL GO

Yes, well, it's another one of these preview things that some of you don't like. Well tough luck mateys. There are many out there who DO want to know what a game will be like. JULIAN 'where's my Zoid, Martech' RIGNALL has been taking a look at **ZOIDS** *and gabbing away to the ELECTRONIC PENCIL COMPANY.*

Zoidstar, the Zoids' home planet is gripped by war. The Blue Zoids (good) fight the Red Zoids (evil) in a massive and merciless battle for supremacy. You too have to take part in this mighty war but as you are carrying the mighty Zoid leader, Zoidzilla, to the battleground disaster strikes. Your ship is hit by a missile blowing Zoidzilla into eight separate pieces and scattering them over hostile Red terrain.

Luckily you manage to escape, and rubbing your head you climb into a back-up Zoid to set out to collect those eight parts, because if you don't the war will be lost.

As you can imagine, trundling with your big Blue Zoid through enemy territory is like showing a red rag to a bull, although if you trundle with stealth your presence might not be noticed for a while.

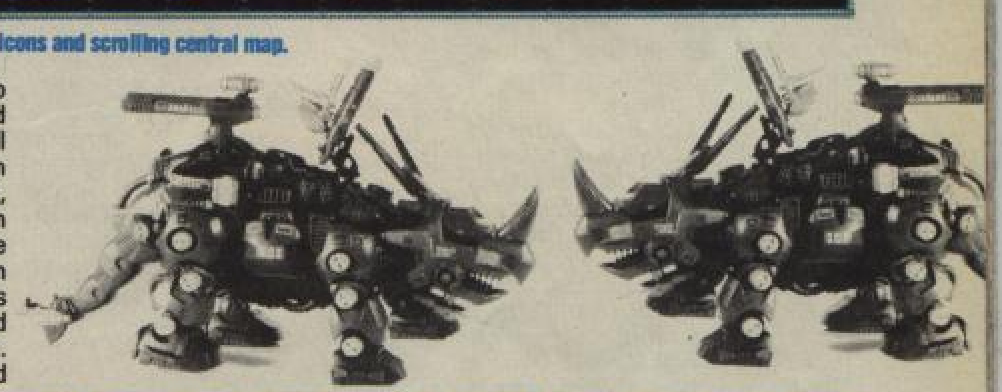
The Electronic Pencil Company have crammed in an amazing social structure for the Red Zoid environment. There are several cities within the playing area and are all interconnected. Hellrunner Zoids hurtle along the roads between the cities and act as messengers/reconaissance. If you're spotted then the Spinebacks are alerted. These protect the Red cities and attack the player as soon as they find their target. There are also Slitherzoids which carry fuel and ammunition. They are also heavily armed and although slow, prove to be formidable foes. The leader of the Red Zoids, Big Red Horn, wanders around the landscape looking for trouble. If you encounter him then it's advisable to turn around and leg it in the opposite direction as fast as your metal limbs can carry you.

These cities produce Zoids and have to be destroyed if the eight pieces of Zoidzilla are to be collected. This is where the strategy element of the game comes in, because the cities are connected blundering into one could prove disastrous. As soon as one is attacked Hellrunners are sent with emergency messages to the nearest other cities. This gives you very little time to complete the job, and if ill-planned you could find all the routes away from the city quickly blocked by Spinebacks. You can play the game in Rambo style but usually a carefully, calculated game has better results.

Luckily your back-up Zoid is well armed and powered up (extra power units can be picked up) and you can take on all minor Zoids fearlessly. Offensive weaponry includes guns, missiles and mines. When in gun mode the player can choose between machine guns or canon — any choice means that shells can be continuously pumped into a target to wear it down. Missiles have to be primed



Zoids are GO — clearly seen are the eight icons and scrolling central map.



Having dropped an intelligent mine (with camera), it has alerted you to the presence of a Spineback. Will you order destruction, or not?



before launch. The correct amount of fuel has to be put into the missile to allow its engine to cut out and glide down onto its target. The player guides the left/right tragectory, but beware — the Red Zoids have anti-missile flares. There are three types of mines — intelligent and two types of unintelligent. The two normal mines are pressure sensitive with time delay and can be dropped on the road for any other Zoid (including yourself) to blunder into. Intelligent ones have video cameras and they can be selectively detonated, or (if you're shrewd) left alone to be used for surveillance purposes.

The defence system of the player's Zoid is also pretty effective. The Zoid has an octagonal (eight) shield which can be rotated to protect its vital functions. Incoming missiles can also be deflected with flares and by jamming them electronically. This is pretty tricky to do since the player has to match the Zoid's output wave with the missile's guidance wave in a very short period of time.

All the action takes place on a large scrolling map shown in the centre of the screen (only 1% of the map shown at one time say the EPC). The map shows your position (a little blip) along with any other Zoids and and of course all the cities, roads and landscape features.

There are eight other icons on screen which are used to activate the Zoid's various functions — missiles, guns, defence, scan, visual, manipulate, information and status. Using any of the latter five functions causes a screen to 'window' out. (During this time the Zoid carries on trucking down the road — he's intelligent and will warn you if anything's up). **Information** gives you just that, although you have to select something on the map first otherwise your computer won't know what you're going on about. **Visual** shows any object selected by the player graphically. **Status** tells you exactly how damaged the Zoid has become and how many pieces of Zoidzilla you have collected. **Manipulate** allows the player to pick up and drop objects and also activate mines. **Scan** just gives a readout of the nearest piece of Zoidzilla or power pod.

There's plenty to do and the game should certainly take quite a while to solve. I hope I've whet your appetites... I can't wait...



NOT QUITE A SUNDAY DRIVE . .

Not content with trundling about in a ZOID, JAZ has been sitting in **ELEKTRAGLIDE** *— a rather speedy little computer car — and taking it through its paces.*

Just in case you think **English Software** have done incredible things to the Commodore you're wrong. We've used Atari screen shots (which are much prettier), but don't fret — the 64 version will be just as good (apart from the colour difference).

When Phil Morris of English Software first rang me and raved about a new racing game that would knock anything else into a cocked hat I was dubious. Hmmmm, heard it all before I thought. It wasn't until a week later when I received a video of the game and had a good look at it that I stopped doubting . . . *Elektraglide* is fast, real fast!

It's not like a run-of-the-mill racing game — the idea is just to keep going until you complete the set course. Yah! Boring, you might well say. What I forgot to tell you is that there are obstacles on the track to stop you from solving the course. These come in the form of massive bouncing spheres, spinning cubes (all shaded and in proper perspective) and pillars (kindly dropped by a passing aeroplane). At the speed *Elektraglide* goes they're not all that easy to dodge and to encounter them in horribly realistic and fast 3D for the first time makes your blood rush.

The only racing game to feature tunnels was the three screen arcade epic TX1 . . . not any more *Elektraglide* does too! These form just about the most stunning feature of the game, and they rush towards you in glorious 3D and also have bends in them. The feeling of realism as you come out of the tunnel is uncanny. You see the exit as a little point of light which gets bigger and bigger until you suddenly emerge.

The other feature which also appeared in TX1 and now appears here is forks in the road — these appear at regular intervals and are hailed by signposts giving you a few moments to decide which route to take.

The game also features bi-scrolling landscape which adds depth, trees and signposts that rush up at you, and overhead gantries.

The only way to really appreciate the game is by playing it... and you'll be able to do that around the end of November (unless you've got an Atari, that'll be the end of October. He! He! He!)







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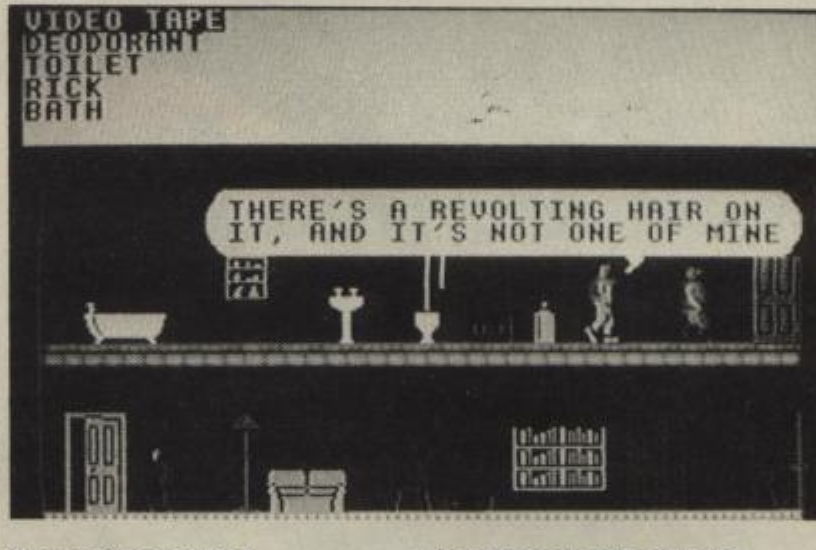
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ZZAP! PREVIEW

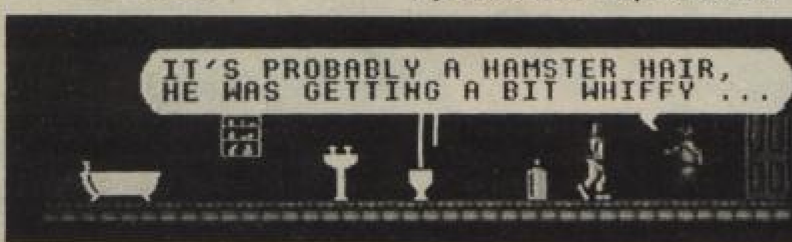
THE YOUNG ONES — AN EARLY LOOK

Gary Penn, the ZZAP! Vivian groupie who's haircut owes a fair bit to a pair of garden shears, played host to Orpheus the other day. Here's what he learnt:

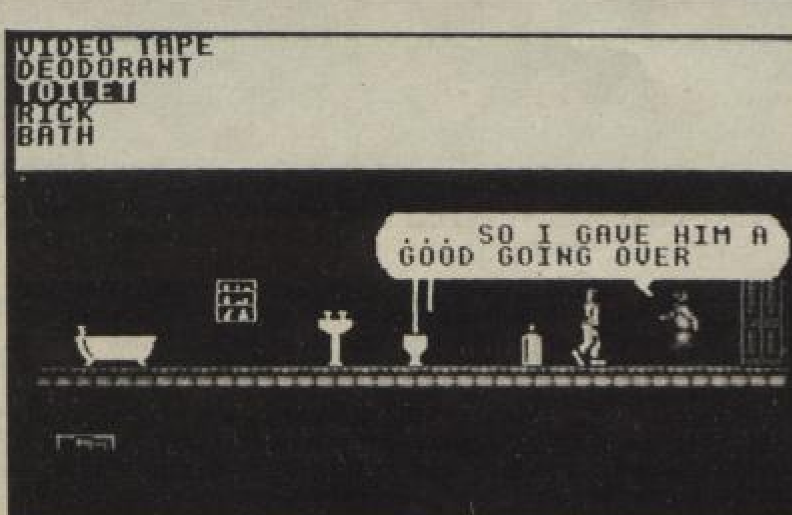
Yes PREview. The game is far from finished and we're not out to mislead you by printing so called 'exclusive REviews' of what is most certainly an incomplete product. John Marshall of Orpheus (oh he whose sumptuous, scrumptious dish of Basmatti rice and green peppers is the envy of reknowned culinary experts everywhere) came up to Ludlow, took us out for a couple of drinks and dossed the night in our flat. Oh, he also took the opportunity to tell us something about the *Young Ones* game . . .



Well John, what inspired you to write a game based around the exploits of this cult, hit television show?
Well Gary, it was money. No, seriously, it was a sort of company thing. One day we all just decided 'Hey! Let's do a Young Ones game!'







Ah. So where did you actually start?
We decided the game had to be some kind of adventure — you can't do an arcade game as there aren't the essential elements within the series. We also wanted some kind of speech in the game since almost all of the humour in the series is via, how shall I say, 'the spoken word'. Anyway, it was suggested early on that we would need help from the original script writers. So . . .
What was it like working with them?
God that's a difficult one to answer! No, they were really nice people. They were very enthusiastic and it was important to them that the original theme of the series wasn't lost. They didn't want a game of 'dodge Rick and throw an axe at Neil' sort of thing. The game takes place in the Young Ones house. There's plenty of rooms and objects lying around — I think there are about 100. Some of them aid characters while others hinder.
So what exactly is the game?
It's difficult to describe without giving too much away. I suppose it could be called an animated adventure.
Is there a definable object?
Yes, sort of. There are four sets of 'ideals', one for each character. It's what they most want to achieve. The task is the same for each character but the route they have to take is different. The other three characters are all trying to beat you to it. Your character actually knows what he's got to do, but it's as if he's gone blind and you have to guide him.
I gather you can play the character of your choice?
Yes. You choose at the beginning of the game. The others can be a help or a hindrance.
So the other characters are interactive?
Definitely. They have their own personalities and traits and lead a life of their own. They even have a limited memory. Because you don't quite know what to do you can often end up annoying them. You can 'talk' to them though, to obtain hints on how to progress in the game.
How's that done — text input?
No, certainly not. You choose the object you want to talk about and the characters tell you about it. But it all depends on who the object belongs to, whether it's being carried or not and what you remember about it. That sort of thing. The game isn't exactly icon driven but a similar process is used in that you select an action or word from a list. You can walk and talk, pick up an object or put it down, switch things on and off . . .
Do you use the joystick to move at all?
No, you don't actually walk as such. When you select the walk option you are given a list of all nearby rooms you can move to. The character moves of his own accord when you tell him where you want him to go.
When can we expect to see the finished game?
Oh, I suppose we might have something for you next month . .

The pictures were actually taken off of a Commodore 64, but they were downloaded from a BBC first. So now you know.

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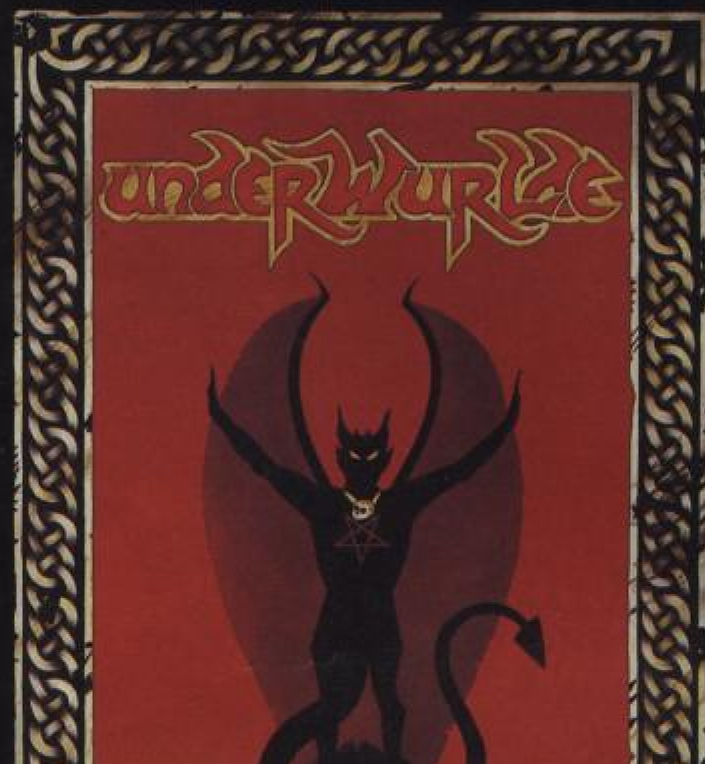
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When the Music Stops Uncle Gary Will Be Here to Speak to you . . .

Mixing play with education has been one of the cherished tennets of teaching since the early sixties when 'revolutionary' concepts upset the more Victorian stick and no carrot traditions that held that children should be seen and not heard and if seen, then only when sitting quietly, neatly and in a well behaved manner.



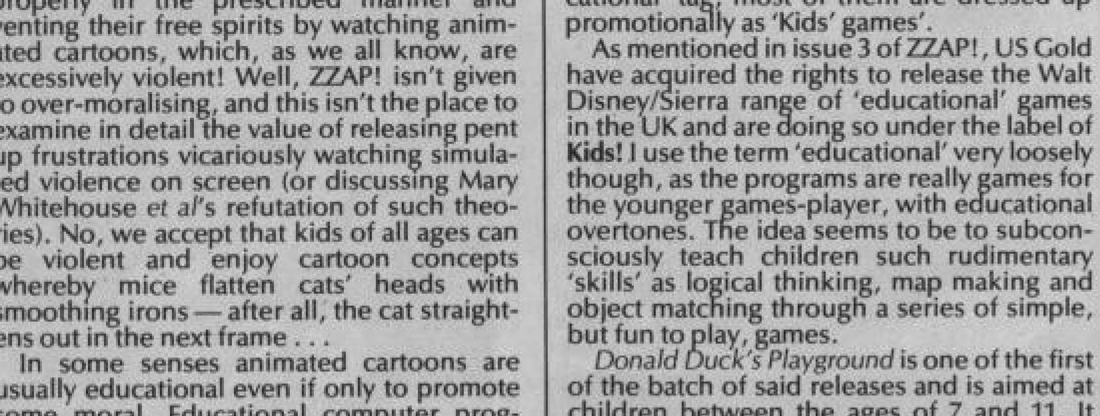
Freedom of expression has become everything, so now we all know that when five year-old Johnny is caught bashing in the head of four year-old Jimmy, he's not really exhibiting a possible violent streak, but only expressing his sense of angst at the world's oppression of his free spirit.

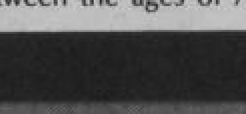
During the pre-sixties (repressive) era, children had to make do with behaving properly in the prescribed manner and venting their free spirits by watching animated cartoons, which, as we all know, are excessively violent! Well, ZZAP! isn't given to over-moralising, and this isn't the place to examine in detail the value of releasing pent up frustrations vicariously watching simulated violence on screen (or discussing Mary Whitehouse *et al*'s refutation of such theories). No, we accept that kids of all ages can be violent and enjoy cartoon concepts whereby mice flatten cats' heads with smoothing irons — after all, the cat straightens out in the next frame . . .

In some senses animated cartoons are usually educational even if only to promote some moral. Educational computer programs have lived in a bit of a limbo — parents approve, children often don't! They want their computer games to be fun. Well some educational programs have been successful in being both fun and useful, but with the past twelve month's obsession with TV and film tie-ins, it surely comes as no surprise to see the trend spread to the educational field as well. A few programs have appeared recently sporting famous and popular heroes from the big and small screen. In an attempt to get away from the stuffy 'educational' tag, most of them are dressed up promotionally as 'Kids' games'.

As mentioned in issue 3 of ZZAP!, US Gold have acquired the rights to release the Walt Disney/Sierra range of 'educational' games in the UK and are doing so under the label of **Kids!** I use the term 'educational' very loosely though, as the programs are really games for the younger games-player, with educational overtones. The idea seems to be to subconsciously teach children such rudimentary 'skills' as logical thinking, map making and object matching through a series of simple, but fun to play, games.

Donald Duck's Playground is one of the first of the batch of said releases and is aimed at children between the ages of 7 and 11. It basically attempts to teach a child the value of money and how to use it, although the currency used is as foreign as the program — ie American. The explanation given on the poster instructions supplied with the game seems to adequately justify this apparent flaw though. Donald is actually quoted thus: 'It makes learning more fun, introducing children at an early age to other people's cultures'. Doesn't quite sound like the duck I once knew but then I suppose he's matured with age (after all, he must be well over 50 by now).

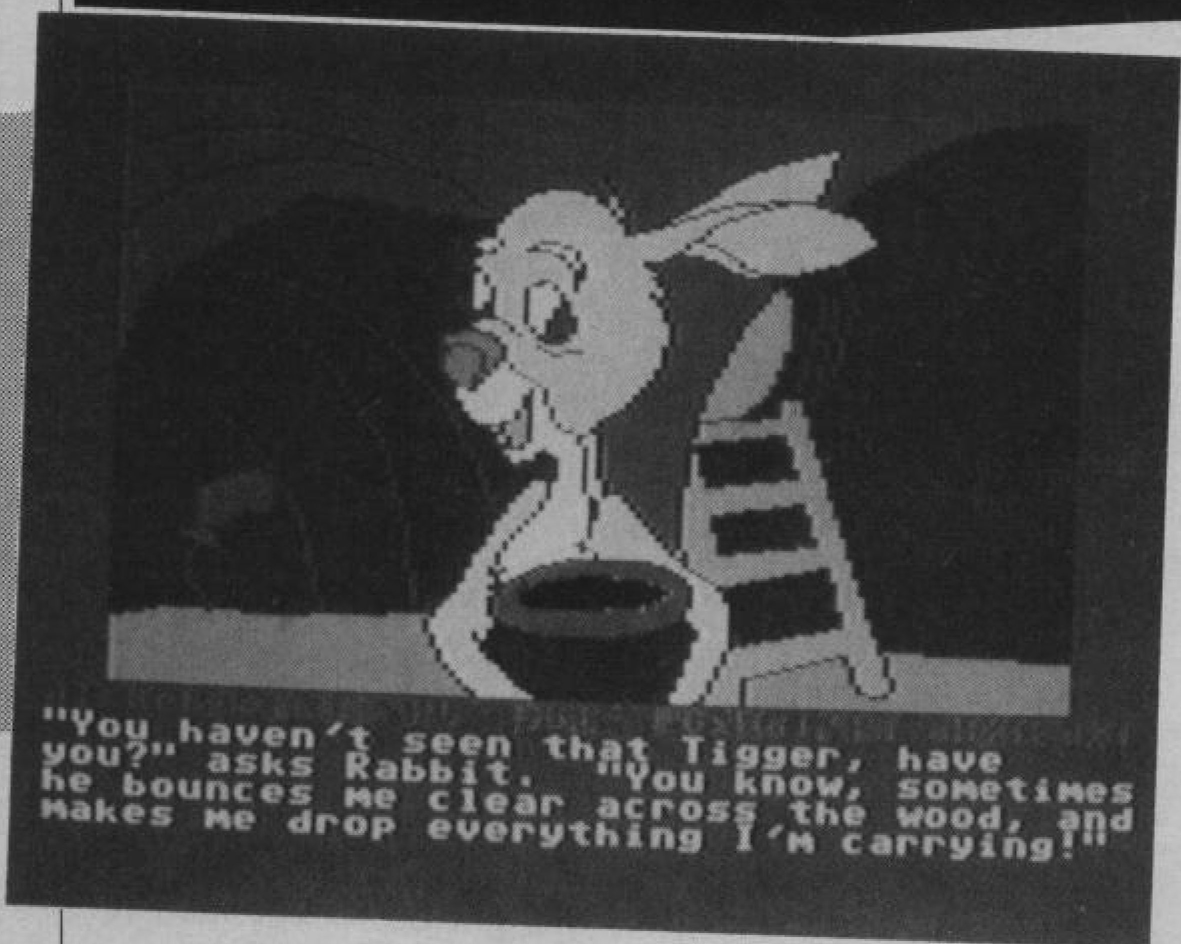




The player has to help 'Nunkie Donald build a playground for his three nephews, Huey, Dewey and Louie. But first he has to earn enough money to buy equipment by working on any of four different jobs. According to the instructions this teaches the child the concept of 'labour for pay', which is fair enough. The jobs all require some manual dexterity with the joystick and involve object matching in one form or other. For example one of the jobs is at the Product Market and has Donald sorting fruit and vegetables chucked from the back of the market truck. The 'product' is thrown from the right hand side of the screen and Donald must be moved to catch it. The fruit must then be matched up with the correct box and placed in it to earn cash.

Perhaps the most impressive and appealing aspect of *Donald Duck's Playground* is the graphics. Overall they are of a very high standard with plenty of big, bold, colourful characters that are easily identifiable. Combined with the jolly music and sound effects *Donald Duck* is a program that should appeal to a majority of budding young gameplayers. Although I don't think it has a great deal to offer on the educational side.

Winnie the Pooh in the Hundred-Acre Wood, the second of the US Gold/Walt Disney/Sierra products, is another jolly game boasting super graphics that's fun to play and of possibly dubious educational value, unless



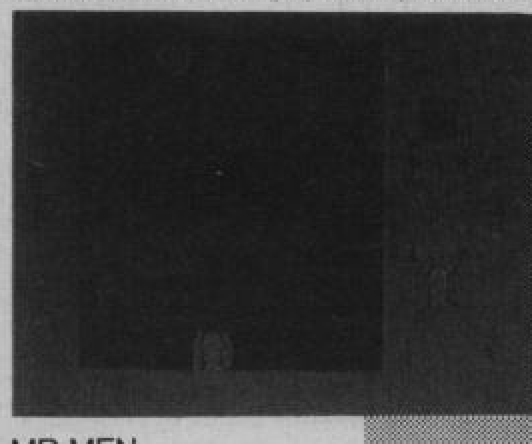
you regard lines like, *'This is Rabbit's Kitchen. It's full of vegetables — no wonder he's so healthy!'* as being educational! It's a simplified adventure game that concentrates on teaching children of 8 or over to think logically, develops their mapping and reading skills and lets them have a bit of fun in the process.

Each character in Hundred Acre Wood lost an important belonging when a blustery wind came up and blew them everywhere. It's up to you to find things like Owl's books of poetry and Pooh's honey pot, and return it to its rightful owner. The objects are placed randomly each time a new game is played, which adds greater holding power to the stories. Input has been made as easy as possible by numbering the several text options available, and the beautifully drawn pictures are speedily accessed from disk for each one. An added bonus is the typically Milnesque sense of dry humour used in the text.

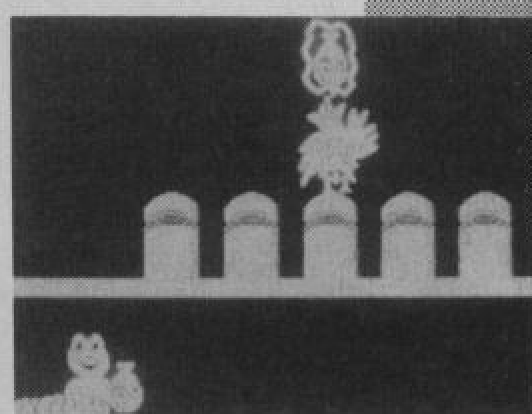
The US Gold/Walt Disney/Sierra line up promises releases soon of *Mickey's Space Adventure* and *Goofy's Word Factory*, featuring the famous characters in an adventure game and a sentence construction/arcade game respectively.

Turning from the American inspired programs (although purists would of course insist that Winnie is 'ours' and no 'theirs'), there are some telly heroes on British software. Mirrorsoft have a package of four **Mr Men** games aimed at the 4 - 8 years bracket under the general heading of *Here and There with the Mr. Men*. These do not avoid the 'educational' tag however. *Mr Tickle's Jigsaw Puzzle*, *Mr Tickle and Mr Grumpy*, *Mr Lazy* and *Mr Men versus Mr Tickle* are all aimed to lead children in 'an amusing and stimulating way' to grasp the concept of 'left and right'. The accompanying booklet is designed to be read by a parent as a story to go with the games. Unlike the US Gold offerings, the Mr Men games use rather simple, though brightly coloured, blocky graphics, and I would have thought the tasks may become repetitive to kids rather quickly. For instance, in *Mr Lazy* you guide a worm up and along the branches of a tree in order to reach an apple and knock it down on Mr Lazy's head as he snoozes under the tree. No doubt this very simple exercise might amuse a four year-old for a while, but I very much doubt whether it would appeal to an eight year-old for more than one go.

The important difference between these games and those from the Walt Disney stable lies very much in the graphics as well as the ideas, and in that department there's little doubt that US Gold score heavily.

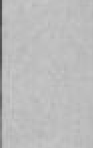


MR MEN



ORM & CHEEP





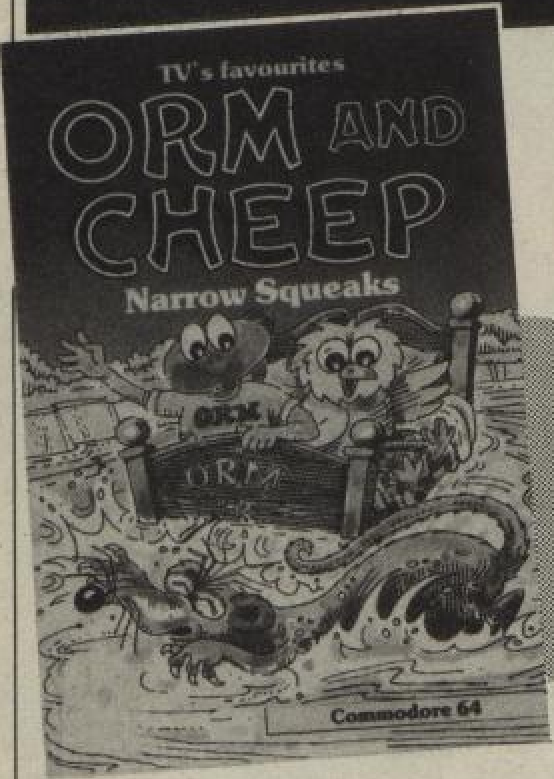
Macmillan Software do rather better on the graphics score with their Orm and Cheep games programmed by Widgit. There's two, *Narrow Squeaks* and *The Birthday Party*. These are described as suitable for 'Kids of all ages', which is a somewhat loose description of their suitability. Both start with a reaction test to set the level of difficulty — a neat touch. If you don't know, Orm and Cheep, a worm and a yellow bird, are popular TV characters for the younger bracket.

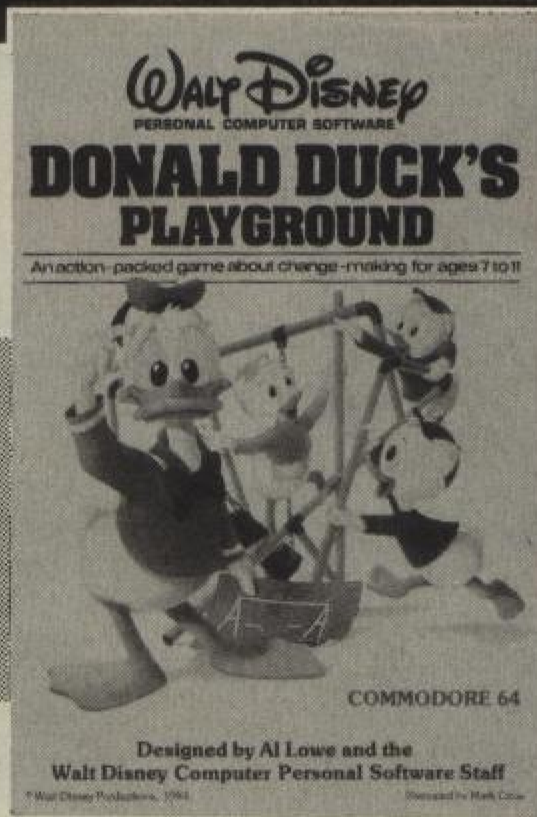
Narrow Squeaks offers four games featuring these two plus a rat and a crow. The graphics are attractive although the games are very simple. In play testing the identical Spectrum versions of these and *The Birthday Party* for CRASH magazine, Rosetta McCleod and her team of 5 to 14 years old found them to be 'totally boring and pointless'. The latter game is a graphic adventure, although in most respects it is as much an adventure as *Donald Duck's Playground*, which is to say that it's really composed of several arcade-

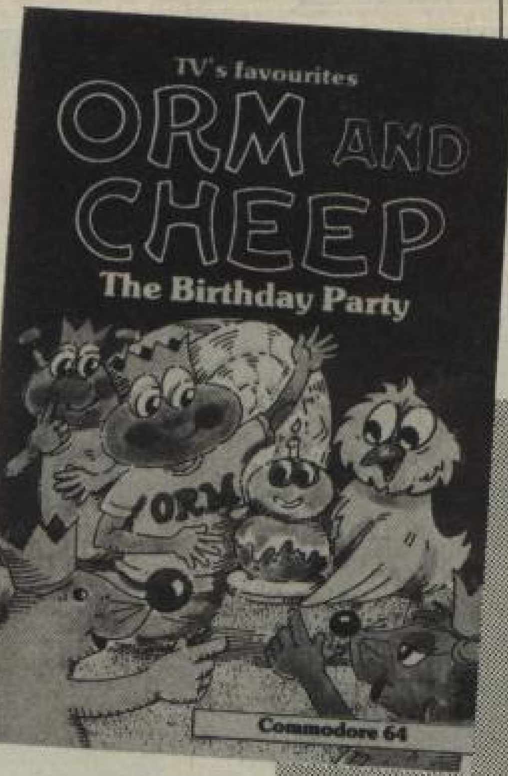
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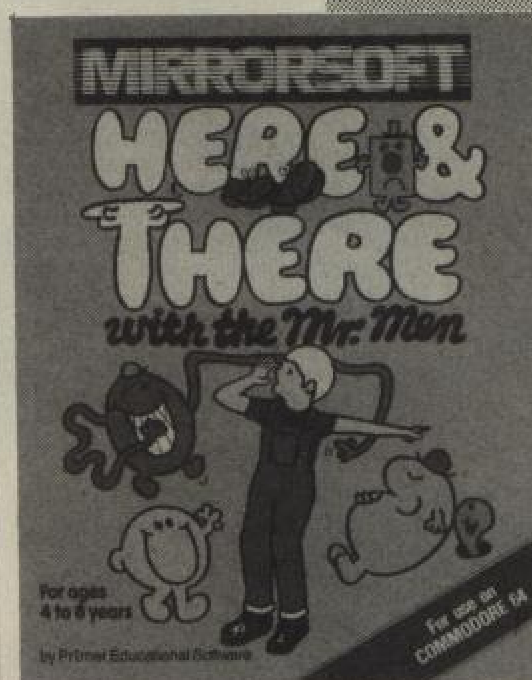




ish sequences where you help Orm bake his birthday cake, collect all his friends for the party and then get them satisfactorily seated. Rosetta's team summed the two games up as 'Absolutely awful!'. Perhaps a little harsh, especially as the graphics on the 64 versions are very jolly at times, although not a patch on the Disney games, and add a lot of visual interest. However, it has to be said that the educational value in these two is extremely low, I would have thought, and if they are supposed to simply be attractive games for kids of all ages, then perhaps the gameplay elements should have been substantially improved.

Generally then, the Disney games seem to have the edge over the home-grwon product. On the other hand they are more expensive, especially if you opt for disk versions (essential in the case of *Winnie the Pooh*), but honestly, I would have to say that you also get rather a bit more for your money.

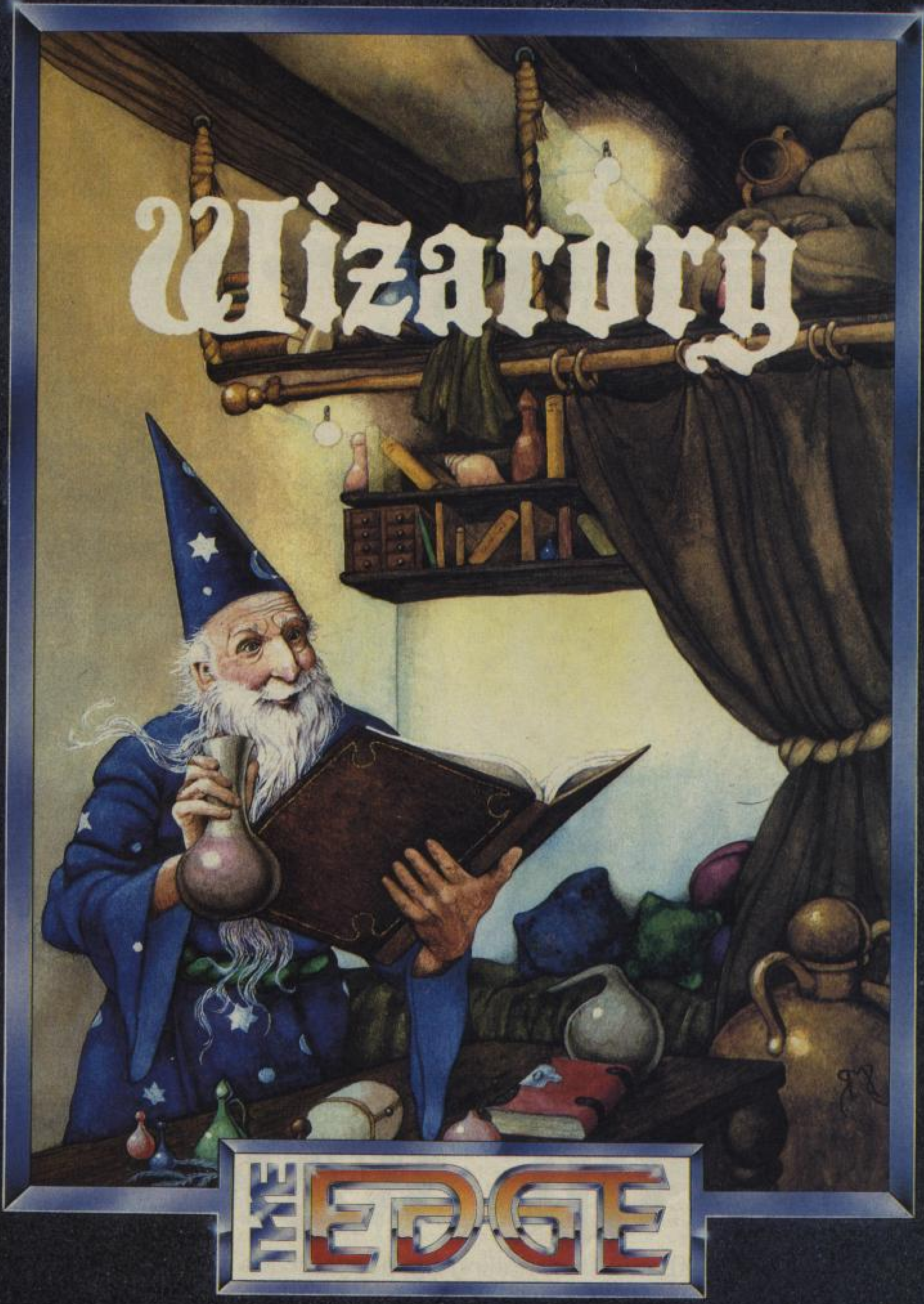
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ZZAP! TIPS

FROM THE PEN OF PENN

OK, OK, so there aren't many tips this month. But what's here is pretty good. I mean just look at these exclusive *Gribbly's Day Out* tips from the author Andrew Braybrook. You can't get more definitive than that now can you? And just look at the rather jolly *Sabre Wulf* map. Very handy if you ask me, squire. Still, next month's issue being the huge, great Christmas Special, there will be plenty of room for some really meaty, tasty and filling stuff. Mmmm. Mouthwatering just thinking about it really. Until then here are a few juicy snacks to keep you going . . .

A MESSAGE FROM GRIBBLY ON BLABGOR

Translated from Blabgese by ANDREW BRAYBROOK

Greetings from Blabgor. Over the past few months I have been getting these severe headaches. I can't quite put my big toe on it but it could be that many of you don't fully understand the complexities of completing my *Day Out*! I therefore have sent you this message to hopefully relieve the pain.

Firstly there are some vicious rumours going about that I am a frog. This is entirely untrue. Buses are green, but no-one calls them frogs. Secondly it was reported that Blabgor is underwater. This is also untrue. How could I possibly breathe underwater? And underwater *waterfalls*? Absolutely absurd, even on Earth such things do not exist.

BOUNCING

My *Day Out*, although concerning the protection of the carefree younger generation of Blabgor, does not mean that the over 14s cannot help me in my quest. All people may help as the task is far from easy. There are also whispers going about that my character set is totally unreadable. I do assure you that it looks fine from where I am and anybody who cannot read it probably is in need of a new TV set, or a new C64, or both.

I would like to offer some suggestions for getting the most out of bouncing. It's not a particularly fast method of getting around, but it is very easy to do. Pressing the fire button will enable me to bubble away the pesky Topsy creatures and I can also pick up or drop a Gribblet. I have noticed that I am often requested to drop the Gribblet every time I have to blow bubbles. This is not necessary. If you keep the button pressed after I pick up a Gribblet, I will continue to bubble but will not drop the gribblet. This is because I can bubble all the time, but can only complete one function every time the button is held down. I got medals for my bubbling, but that is another story.

Having grabbed a Gribblet, I usually then head for the home cave. Flight is much faster, so the first thing to do is take off. This can be done by stopping in a clear area and then majestically rising into the air. Of course just bouncing off the edge of the land also works, but it does put the wind up me rather, as I have to go into flight mode in panic as I no longer see land below.

A rather elegant method of gaining height and getting into the swing of flying is to jab the joystick up as I reach the top of a bounce. This is known as the mid-bounce take off and is really impressive to watch. Of course, stopping once in flight requires a little practice, but I can leap over low barriers or intro otherwise enclosed triangles by using this method.



Once flying, I then have all the horrors of dealing with fast approaching land masses, as well as the web. My one comfort is that I can at least fly through waterfalls unscathed. Horizontal flight is not quite as straightforward as is desirable because of this confounded gravity stuff. Although I can reduce its effect, it still requires the occasional upwards jab to keep me flying level. I only wish I was more aerodynamic.

CAVEWARDS HO!

Getting into caves seems to give me most headaches. If possible, it's best to let me rest somewhere below the cave. The gentle vertical take off should the allow me to float up into the mouth of the cave. Again, gravity should be countered by jabbing the joystick up at a rate of about four times a second in order to allow me to float roughly in the same place. When I am about a Gribbly foot higher than the required ledge just hold the joystick to the side. Gravity will slowly pull me down. If you pull me down I'll move downwards too quickly and probably scrape my nose. They sell hundreds of sticking plasters down at the Psi-bank, must be making a packet!

Although my momentum can be a problem for newcomers, this can be ignored by not flying too fast. Gravity is the real problem. You must always remember that any direction pushed on the joystick will be modified by the direction specified by the joystick is only an indication to tell me which direction to accelerate in, and not which direction to immediately move at full speed. I don't live in a platform game now do I?

UNWEAVING A WB

Web section switching gives me nightmares as well. This is best done by approaching the switch below the required section if possible. Thus, if you should miss the switch, I don't have to get sizzled. Similar to pressing fire on the ground, if you hold fire down whilst away from danger, the first switch crossed will be triggered, and subsequent switches won't. Thus, for mid-air 'safe' bubbling, press and hold fire, trigger any switch, and continue to hold fire. I will bubble away merrily, but I won't switch any more switches. Release and press fire again to trigger more switches. You can therefore press fire long in advance of the required switch, and it will trigger when I get to it, so you needn't be accurate with your timing, after all, it's difficult enough on Blabgor, without some idiot making it harder.

Dealing with flappers causes much consternation. So often I release the Gribblet while the web is still active but cannot reach it before it falls into water or a tree. The flappers should be approached at height in a clear area, preferably after web deactivation. A quick bubble followed by a full speed dive to catch the Gribblet. The pleasure of saving a Gribblet is immense, and worth 200 points in all. As the Gribblet falls, it emits a heart-rending squeal, and a squeal of delight if it safely lands in a clear area. It can then be picked up. Unfortunately the chances of landing are not good, what with the abundant plant life and water around, so a mid-air rescue is always best.

All 16 places that I visit on my *Day Out* were created carefully by the landscape gardeners of ancient Blabgor. I suspect that Seon had a hand in narrowing some of the gaps before he was imprisoned but nevertheless I am more than capable of getting through all of them to rescue the Gribblets. Admittedly I have practised some of the difficult ones while Seon wasn't around! The technique of getting through narrow vertical gaps, ie I have to fly sideways, is simple. Rule one, don't try to go in slowly. The faster I'm travelling, the less I get hurt if I hit something. As long as you can stop me hitting something else on rebounding, then all will be well. If you try to edge me in slowly, gravity will rear its ugly head and make gentle manoeuvres impossible. The less time gravity has to affect my flying, the better. Thus, the method of narrow gaps is to hover near the gap using the jabbing method to maintain height, followed by a sideways or diagonally upwards push to pass the gap at speed.

If the web section opening is difficult for you, most of the early screens can be done with

minimal changes to the web. Routes exist to most Gribblets, although they don't necessarily represent the fastest way. Sometimes a bit of bouncing is needed to reach a route. If you are more confident of opening the web, look for faster routes to cut through to Gribblets, or a faster way into the home cave.

GETTING AHEAD

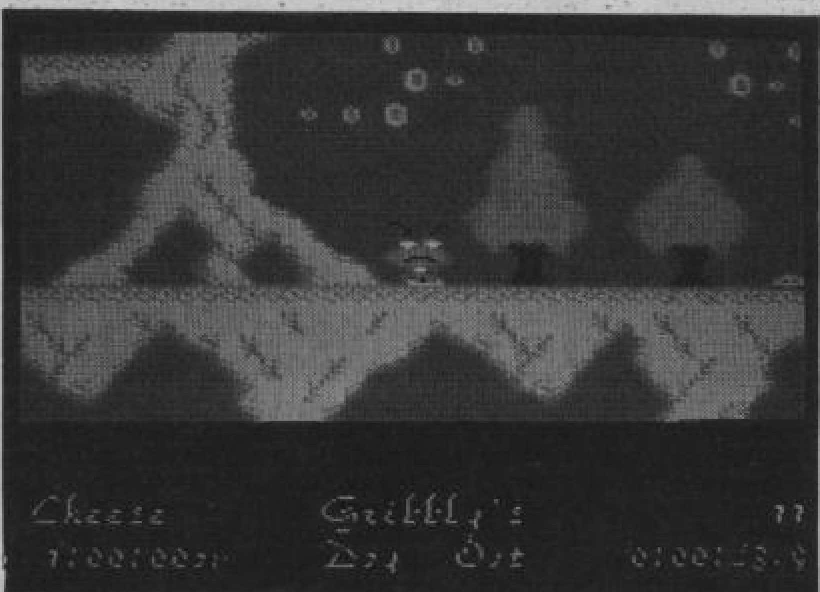
You will have noticed that the next-area-selection system is not particularly random, nor is it supposed to be. The more Gribblets that are rescued, the more confident I will feel. thus if all eight Gribblets are rescued from 'Hide . . .' then I feel confident enough to transport up to three areas away. Each time an area is successfully completed, I count the number of Gribblets above five that have been rescued, and add it to my 'confidence range'. If only six Gribblets are rescued in each area, my 'confidence range' only increases by one each time, and the areas will be tackled in their correct sequence.

The correct sequence is as follows:

1. Hide the Gribblets in the Cave
2. The Aerial Lakelands
3. The flooded cavern
4. the Infinite Waterfalls
5. Wot, No Ground?
6. The Elevated Forests
7. The Blabgorian Staircase
8. Seon is the 6809 Beast
9. The Tunnel
10. Gribbly on the Rocks
11. Gribblets in peril
12. "Water, water everywhere . . ."
13. Concerto for Island and tree
14. Gribbly's Bane (It's a Tough One)
15. Floating Islands galore

Of course, I don't necessarily go as far as I can every time, but it's nice to have the choice. The 16th area is not the place to be and so I don't go there until I have been everywhere else. I can't quite remember the name of it, but if anyone gets there, do let me know!

Various other things happen as the game progresses. The creatures transform more quickly as my 'confidence range' and actual area number increase. The Gribblets also get more restless and are quite difficult to catch, and Seon gets loose much quicker. There do seem to be more creatures around as well. Their transformation antics are at their most efficient by about 'Gribblets in Peril'. After that they transform so quickly that the Topsies rarely have time to flip over the Gribblets. This can be used to advantage to gain extra points by allowing Flappers to carry Gribblets to the cave, before bubbling them. Most of the hard work is done for me on 'Gribblets in Peril'. It also allows Gribblets to be left at ground level to make their own way across on 'Concerto . . .'



GENERAL HINTS

Finally I would like to offer some specific advice on some areas which I have gleaned by sneaking back there at night time while Seon is asleep.

The first four screens all feature a fairly accessable cave very near to my transportation location. All my gribblets may be reached with minimal web removal and no excessive web hacking is required. All Gribblets should at least be audible from the routes.

'Wot no Ground?' provides a brief look at Blabgor above the ground. Many a time I have been allowed to drop into oblivion. It's not very nice there, the service is terrible! Two main structures exist, one from each side. The left cave is the home cave, the right one carries four Gribblets which are fairly safe. The home cave requires some web sections to be removed for easier access from below, the entrance being next to the left wall of the area. Access to Gribblets above the home cave is best done by cutting away the web to the left of the cave. Work round to the top corner, then cut in so that I can bounce along the top and cut my way to the two Gribblets. Seon must have burnt out the useful switches that mean that two sections must remain active, so bouncing is the only way. All this takes considerable time, so it's good to know that a short cut exists back to the home cave from the right hand cave. Follow the route round the bottom, diagonally right, to the top, then round the bend. Note the switchless web which necessitates this journey. Land on the upper island, taking care to avoid the tree. In the middle of this island is the perfect opportunity for a mid-bounce take-off. This is necessary to move around the left hand side of the island, to rescue the Gribblet below, and cut the quick route back along the bottom to the original route.

'The Elevated Forests' features a large home cave structure at stage centre. the entrance is above the middle, and is best reached initially by bouncing along the top of the cave. the home ledges reside to the right. One Gribblet lies through the narrow gap inside the cave. This is the gap described above. Hover between the tree and the gap, then fly diagonally upwards through the gap with reasonable gusto. Missing the gap should result in my bouncing back, but control should be maintainable for a second attempt. getting back is easier by just flying sideways at the gap, gravity working in your favour to negotiate the gap more easily.

Floating above the left of the cave will require the cutting of a web section, the switch requiring me to touch the water in the pool below. I really don't mind getting my foot wet, but touching the land at the bottom will hurt. Getting through should allow you to locate two more Gribblets.

If this area is tackled late, many Gribblets will be captured, and the flappers should be dealt with in the bottom right corner.

'Seon is the 6809 Beast' requires that you bounce to the right, then fly from the cave. The home cave is above the start location. The ledge arrangement here is similar to that in 'Floating Islands . . .' and should be practised, as there is less space to manoeuvre in the latter. The ground level Gribblets by the water should be rescued by landing between the tree and the red flower. The gap is narrow but the flower is harmless, the tree isn't! Other Gribblets may be located by following the routes.

'The Tunnel' is a harrowing place to be. If Seon catches me here, there is no place to go. There are two exits, one each side. The right hand route is the shorter, but more dangerous, take your pick. The home cave is positioned at stage centre top, entry is from the right. Rescue the three gribblets from the Tunnel before cutting through the web from above to rescue those on the top of it. Two easy Gribblets may be rescued early if Psi is running low.

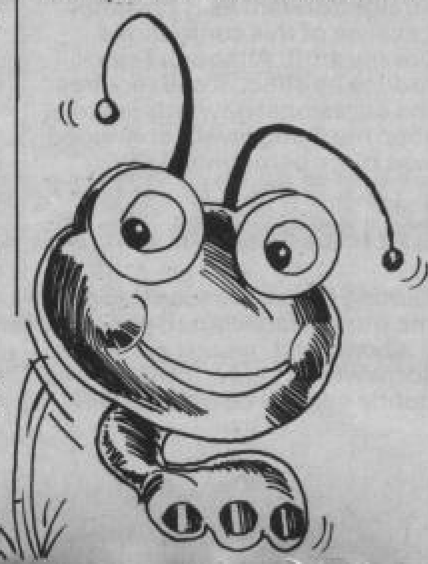
'Gribblets in Peril' and 'Gribbly on the Rocks' were the first and second areas to be created, and thus feature few floating islands. the home caves are identical, and are positioned on the right, one at the bottom, the other at the top. Gribblets are located mostly at the bottom, and are vulnerable to Topsies in the extreme. The last gribblet on 'Rocks' may be difficult to find, look around once the web is down, it's unlikely to get caught.

'Gribblys Bane . . .' as its name suggests is not my favourite place. Just getting out of the starting place isn't easy, someone put the switch right next to a rock. This is best opened first, while I have plenty of Psi. Getting into the home cave section of the initial cave is to the right. The first ledge will take three Gribblets, the raised floor another two, and the last ledge must accommodate the rest. The most difficult Gribblet to reach is again blocked in behind a narrow gap in the top right. Follow the route after bouncing along the main cave. A slightly slower approach is required, but not too slow, just enough to be able to stop in time. Another difficult Gribblet resides on three time islands to the left of the main cave. Unfortunately one of these islands is behind an unswitchable web. Should it be on this one, the only thing to do is rescue another Gribblet before returning to see if it has moved.

On all later areas, Seon will be loose before completion. he will be also be very good at cutting through the web. To send him packing, I have to bubble him until he stops moving, usually about five bubbles, then fly away. He will be stunned for a couple of seconds only, but he will be temporarily disoriented and will probably go and sulk at the bottom somewhere before returning.

I hope that these words of wisdom will be of help to you and will allow you to enjoy my *Day Out* more. It might make it less painful to my head as well!

Gribbly

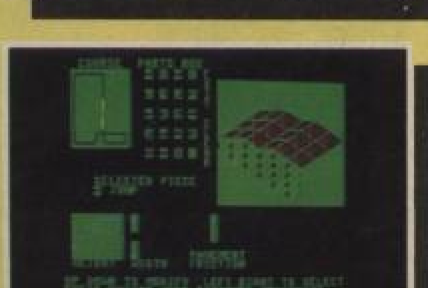


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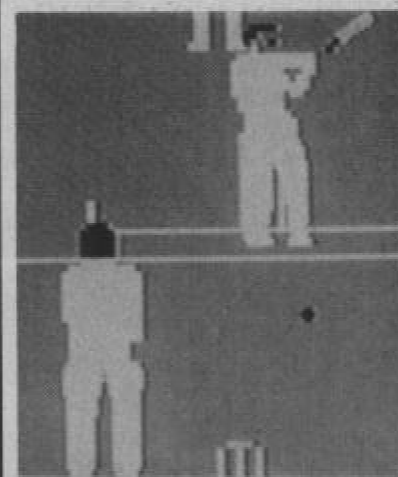
V Interesting Fact: Did you know that if you press the Commodore key (bottom left on the keyboard) during a fencing match, the bout will end and depending upon the situation a win, draw or loss will be declared? You did? In that case I won't bother telling you then.

GRAHAM GOOCH'S TEST CRICKET (Audiogenic)

This letter arrived the other day, addressed to Gary Penn at ZZAP! Well, not exactly to me personally — it was in fact marked for the attention of some bloke called Roger Kean, but we do work on the same magazine in the same building, the same room in fact. We even use the same Apricot, so it was sort of to me really. Anyway it turned out to be from Henry Smithson, **Product Manager of Audiogenic and he said he would appreciate Roger, er me, passing on this little tip to ZZAP! readers.**

The following POKEs enable the user to save out teams created during play to either tape or disk, rather than having to type them in every game. This is what you must do . . .

Load and run the SELECT program and enter the teams as normal. When the program exits to BASIC at the end, enter these POKEs . . .
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and press RETURN. When the teams have been saved, turn the 64 off and on again. Now **LOAD "TEAMS",1,1** (,8,1 disk users) and enter **NEW** before loading the main game program each time.



There have been a considerable number of pleas for POKEs on Ultimate's *Staff of Karnath* and Software Projects' *Jet Set Willy*. Can anyone oblige?

I'm afraid that's all for this month but there's plenty of goodies in store for the next issue. There will be the complete *Blackwyche* solution (along with some useful POKEs) and something on *Wizardry, Rockford's Riot, Summer Games II, Beach Head II, Frank Bruno's Boxing, Strangeloop, Elite, The Fourth Protocol* and many, many more.

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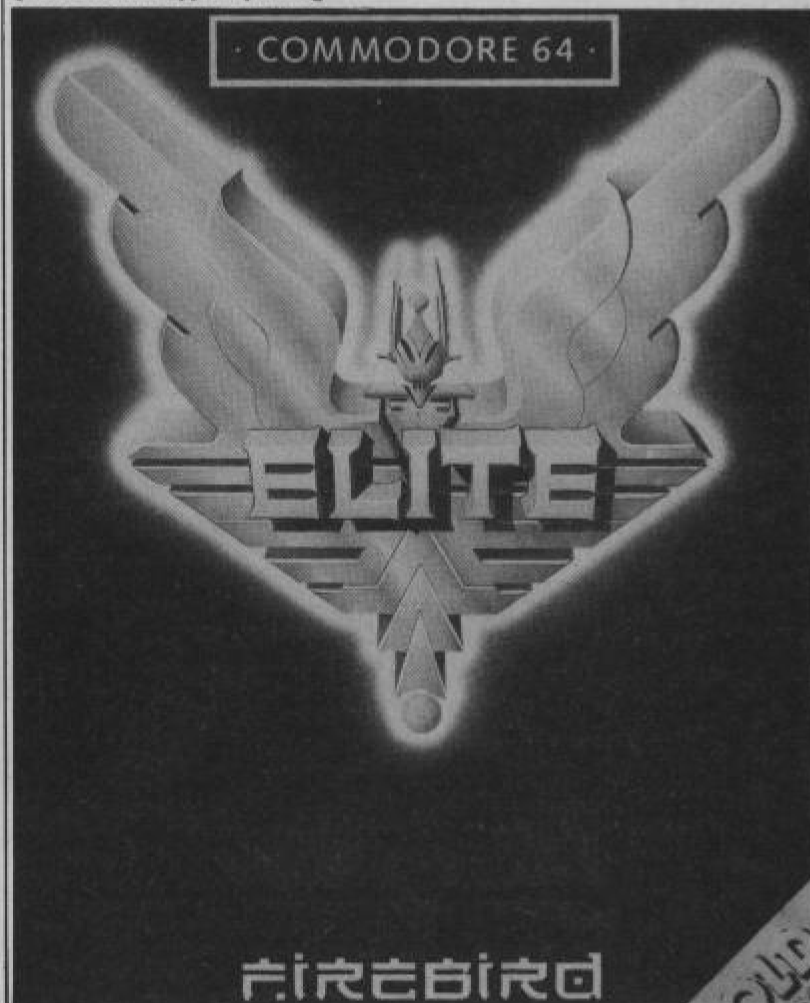
TIPS

ELITE (Firebird)

A number of people have been asking about whichspace. What is it? How do you get there? Are you sure it's spelt w-h-i-c-h and not w-i-t-c-h? To find out the answer to these questions and more, pause the game, press X and 'unpause'. Now hyperspace, holding down the CTRL key in the process and before you know it, gor blimey! Do wot? As it 'appens, you find yourself in whichspace, with plenty of friendly Fargoids for company (ho ho).

Also, a useful bijou bugettipoos when hyperspacing (doesn't work with the above though). Switch to right or left view as you 'jump' and the process is speeded up considerably. Doesn't do much for the speed of the game unfortunately.

Oh yes, following last month's musical 'cheats' here's another for those with *Elite II*. Pause the game and type X then E. Now turn on the music (X, C, M after pausing) . . . Instead of the haunting strains of the Blue Danube seeping from your TV there should be the more uptempo title screen music bursting forth. Golly gosh, locks-a-lordy.



WILLIAM WOBBLER (Wizard Developments)

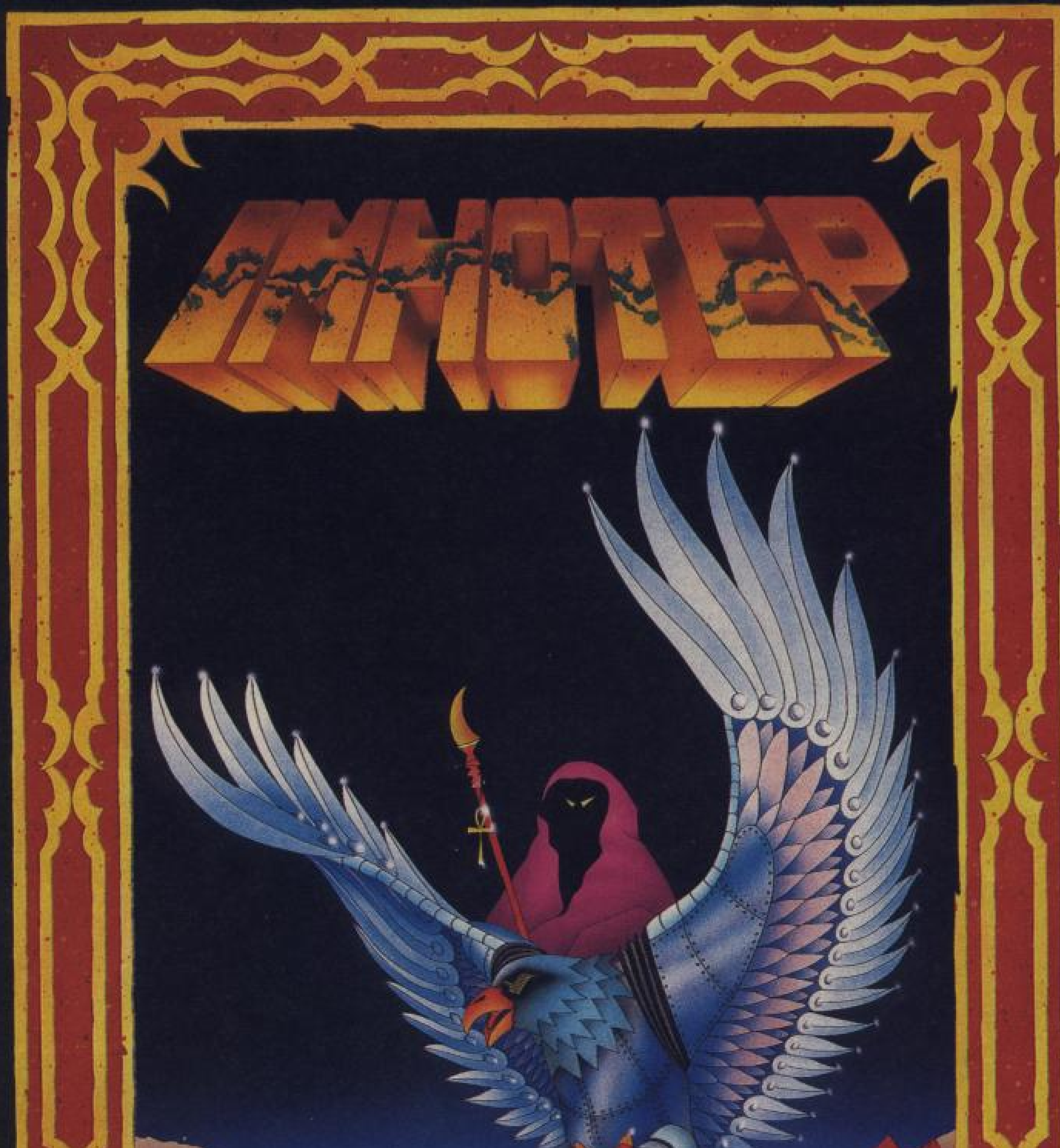
Interesting, hot, faberooni, ace, cool new tip for Anthony Crowther's biggie, *Willy Wobbler*. Press 'I' to get an inventory, then F1 in conjunction with the space bar. On the prompt 'PRESS FIRE TO START', do so and lo and behold . . . An amazing, triff, mega-brill little game for you to play to your hearts content! If you get bored you could always try playing the real game . . .

There was something else about *Billy Wobbler* but I can't quite remember what . . . Oh yeah. Within the game's code there's a message from our Tony pleading you not to get this (the above) printed in any mags. Jaron J Hattrell **(sneak) of Spilsby, Lincs told me that. He also sent in some decent POKEs.** More of those next month though . . .

Anyway, keep all your tips, cheats, POKEs, etc, etc rolling in (like Jeremy Spencer in the morning) and thanks to all of you who make this section possible each month. Unfortunately personal correspondence is out of the question due to the large amounts of mail received. The fact that I'm illiterate don't come into it.

The address, for those who missed it, is, once again, ZZAP! TIPS, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB. See you in the Christmas Special . . .

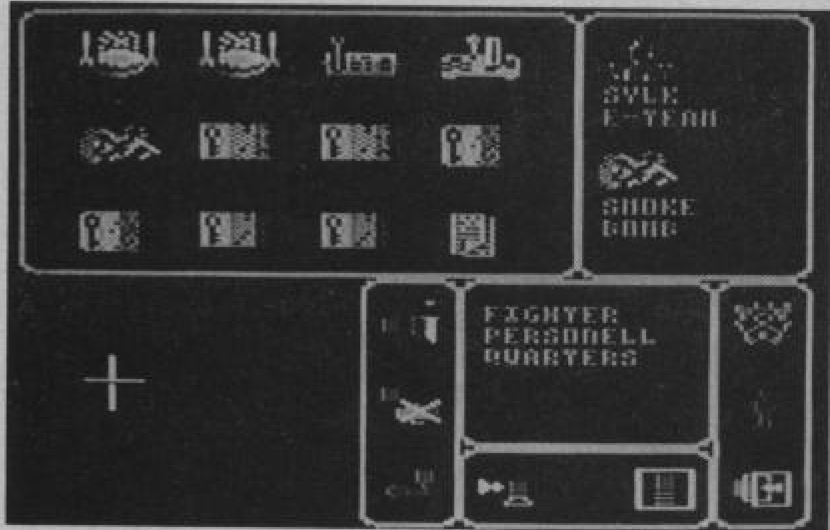
COMMODORE 64



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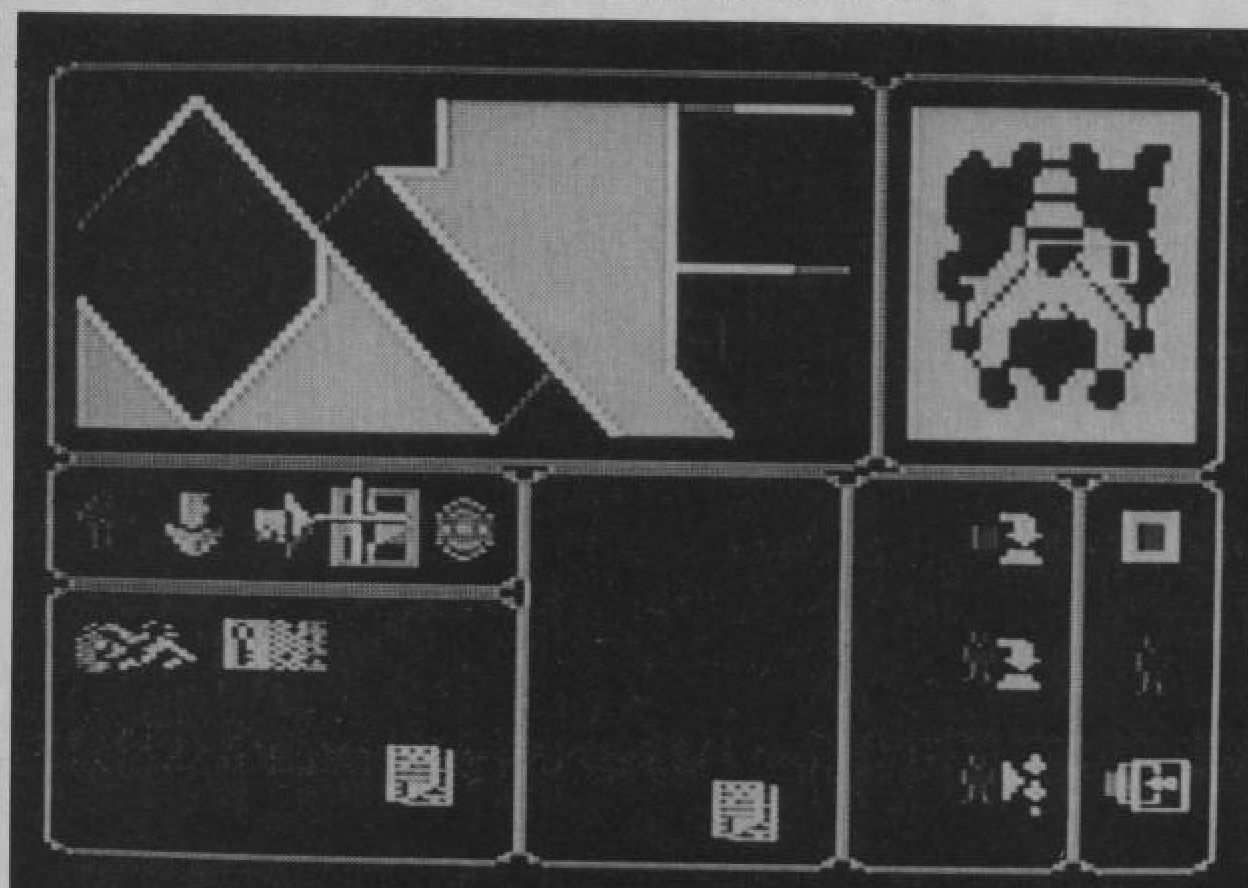
SHADOWFIRE TUNER

Beyond, £3.50 cassette only









In April this year Beyond released a 'revolutionary' new concept in adventure games. Developed by denton Designs, it involved no text input whatsoever, being purely icon driven, and was called *Shadowfire.* Due to its unusual nature it soon became a big hit with gamesplayers and adventures alike. So what is the *Shadowfire* **tuner**?

The tuner is, quite simply, a piece of software that allows you to create or ammend your own saved games. If that doesn't sound particularly inspiring then consider this: With the aid of the tuner you can virtually rewrite the original *Shadowfire* game to your own specifications!

The program makes full use of icon driven commands and follows a very similar format to the original game. The method of input is determined as before by selecting from keys, joystick (digital or analog) and light pen on the title screen. You are then free to use the tuner to its potential.

There are three main 'menu' screens the first of which allows you to determine the length of the mission and load and save games. The second, and probably most important screen presents you with a plan of Zoff V, very handy for making a map. Each of the rooms in the ship can be 'edited' and both objects and characters can be placed within them. The various attributes of a character, such as speed and strength, may be altered to suit your tastes. One could have faster, stronger enemies or, better still, a more powerful Enigma team! This is done via the third menu screen where you find a large list of characters and objects are readily to hand. There are even a few new weapons not previously encountered in *Shadowfire.*

CONCLUSIONS

This proves a very useful utility for the *Shadowfire* fan and injects new life into what is probably now a dead or dying game. My only real gripes are that the program isn't that easy to use initially since some of the new icons are not easily recognisable. It also takes some considerable time to construct a new game. The tuner could be cheaper but it still represents good value for money all the same.

Skool Daze 64



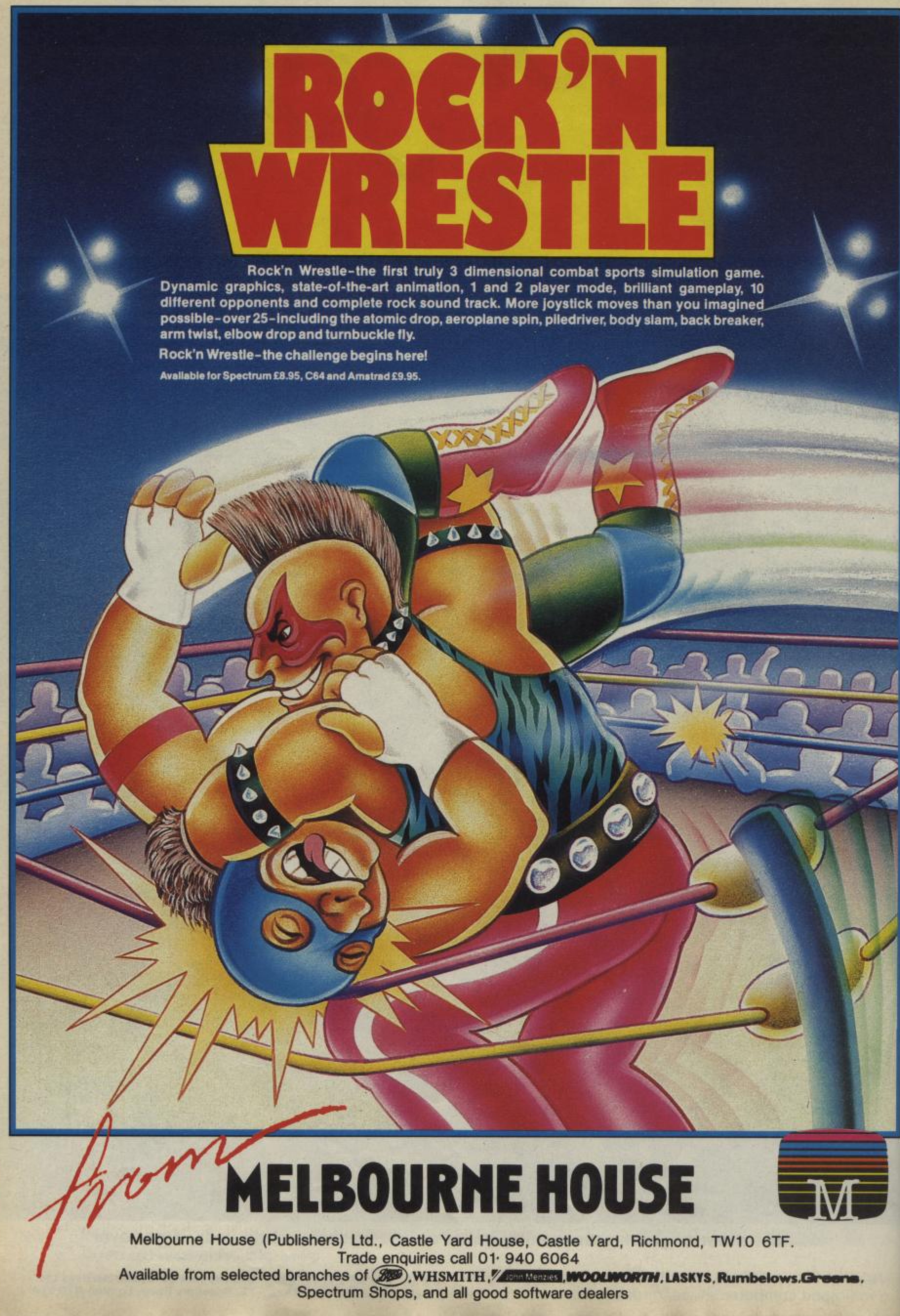
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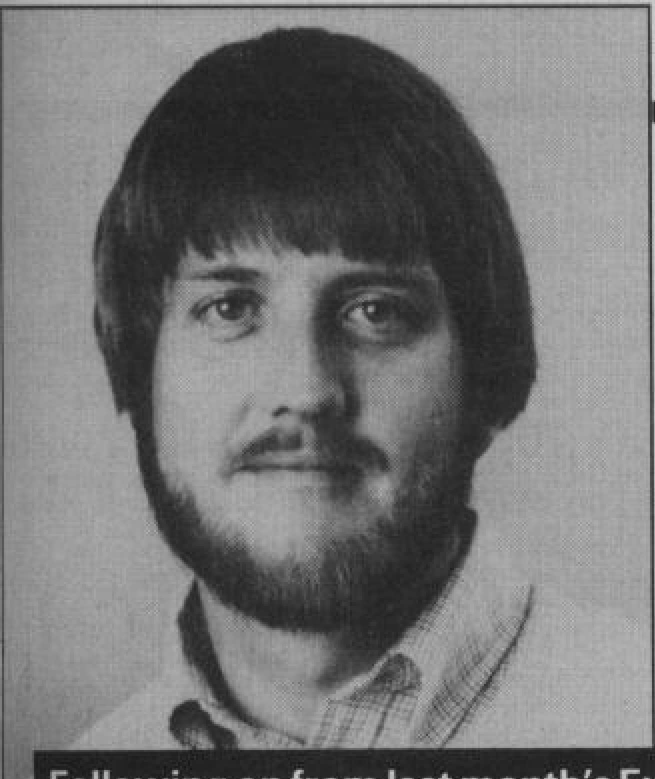
(Personal Computer News Dec. 1984)

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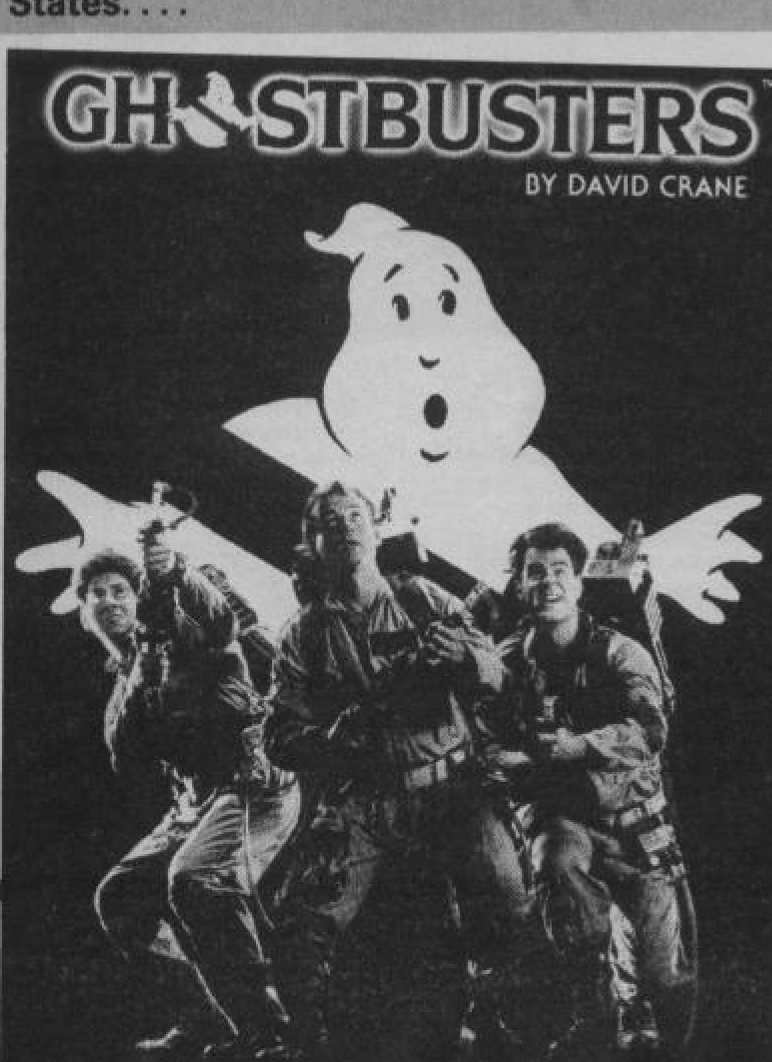


ZZAP! INTERVIEW

THE PET PERSON [redacted] PERSON — DAVID CRANE

Following on from last month's Exclusive review of Pet Person **we now present an interview with Pet Person creator, DAVID CRANE. Quite unusual really, because David prefers to stay away from the limelight and the computer press in general. JULIAN RIGNALL, never one to turn down an opportunity to use the phone, rigged up a tape recorder and dialled the USA. It was 5.30 in the afternoon, and Julian was thinking of home. David, on the other hand, had not long arrived at work. It was 9.30am over in the States . . .**

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Science and technology have always fascinated Mr Crane: 'My first encounter with science goes way back,' he explained. 'When I was a child I played with chemistry sets, microscopes and that sort of thing and really got interested in the sciences. I then began to become interested in electronics too and began picking apart televisions and wiring their controls across the room so I wouldn't have to get out of bed to change the channel.'

An interest in computing came naturally — 'After all, with an interest in science and mathematics and having learned electronics, computers seemed the natural progression', said David. And his first computer was one he built himself!

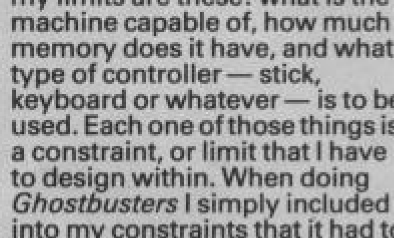
Soon it became clear that a living could be made from computing, and David's first commercial move was to start developing programs for the Atari 2600 VCS including *Dragsters* and the much acclaimed *Pitfall I* and *Pitfall II*. Did he sit down and plan out a game right from scratch? 'No, not at all. My ideas don't stay long on paper. I try to get onto a computer as soon as possible — *Pitfall* was started with my drawings of a little man. I wanted him to run across the screen so I immediately went over to a computer and carried on from there.'

In those days it took a couple of months to develop a game, but David can spend up to a year on a project now. 'I modify the program many times a day, testing it out to see if it's right, and after a year I usually have the finished product.'

Ghostbusters, of course, is a absolutely massive success and one of the biggest selling computer games ever. Did the fact that he had to work around a film limit the game at all?

'The design of *Ghostbusters* was no different from any other entertainment product. I set out to design an original computer game within certain limits. I always set out to design a game within certain limits — usually my limits are these: what is the machine capable of, how much memory does it have, and what type of controller — stick, keyboard or whatever — is to be used. Each one of those things is a constraint, or limit that I have to design within. When doing *Ghostbusters* I simply included into my constraints that it had to feel like the motion picture and it should probably contain aspects of the motion picture. So starting with that I got a piece of paper and a pencil and started to design a game just as original as any other game but containing those elements. So it's not a different process, it was just designing with a set of different constraints'.

Are other game-of-the-film projects in the pipeline? 'We never know from day to day. When *Ghostbusters* came about I'd only seen the movie a couple of days before, and film people had been approaching Activision asking whether we'd be able to do a game based on the film. Three days after seeing the film I was walking in the door and I was asked if I'd be



interested in doing a game based on *Ghostbusters*. I said 'let me sleep on it' and eventually thought it would be a good idea. When another film comes along that would make a game as good as *Ghostbusters*, then we'll certainly be considering the idea.'

On to his latest project, the *Pet People Discovery Kit*. How did it come about? 'Here we have a project that began with many different people, all of whom believed that these little people might really exist in your computer. Activision were the only firm who really had the gumption to put together a project to find these little guys, and find them we did!

'Once they'd been discovered, what we had to do was to create a consumer product — something that would work on the Commodore 64 so that you could take one home and have your own little computer Pet Person to entertain or entertain you.'

The burning question which I was just dying to ask was about the mysterious 'death' of Adam, ZZAP!'s very own Pet Person. What happened to him and will it ever happen again? David explained: 'We found some of the little Pet People were of a very nervous disposition. Sometimes, on hearing that they are to be publicised, they get very scared. A couple of the little guys who came over to Britain were of that disposition, and as soon as they found out that they would be seen by tens of thousands of people they ran inside the computer to hide. Adam was one of these.'

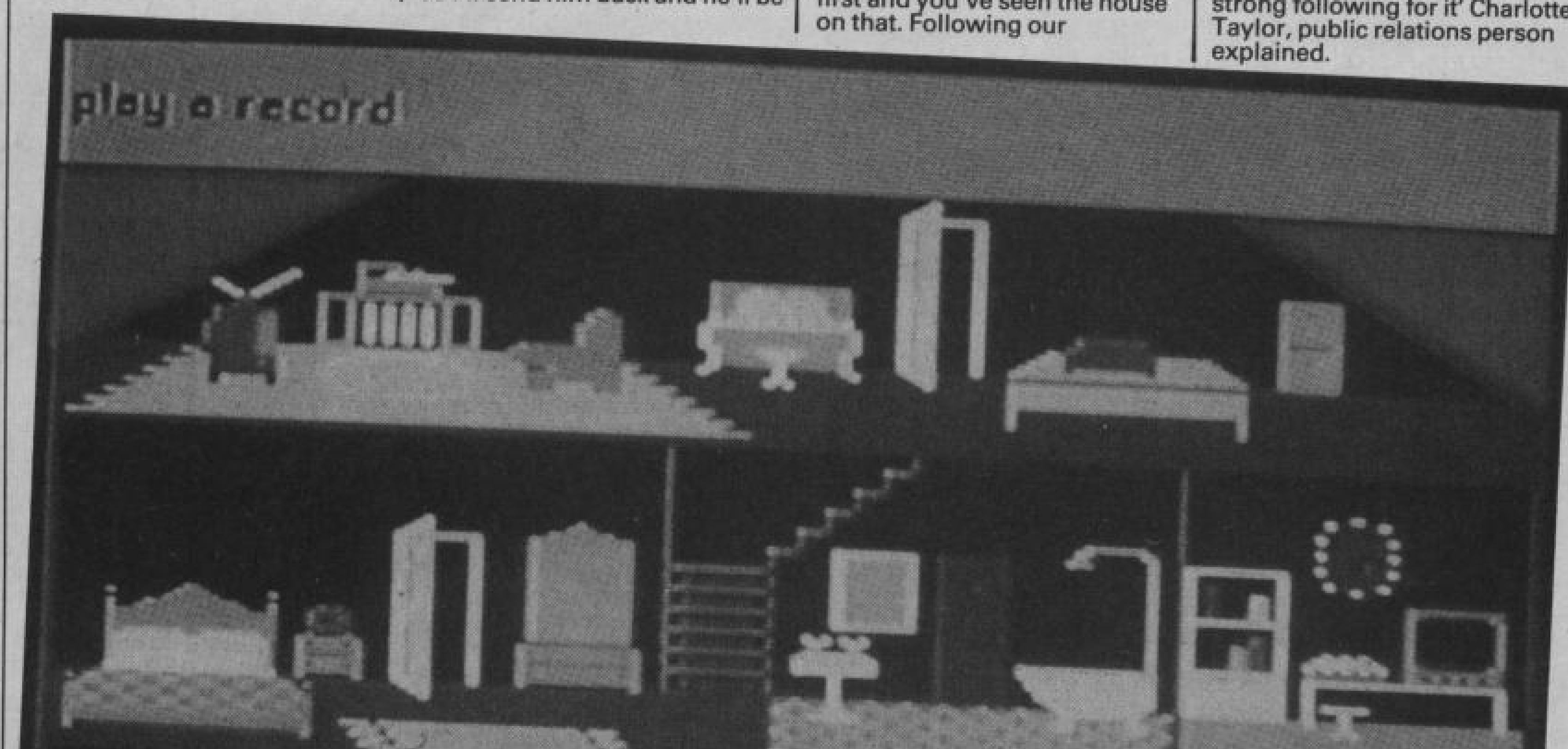
He went on to explain. 'Adam was in there all along, he just got scared and hid. Tell the guy who thought he'd killed him that Adam is in fact alive and well. We've found him, and soothed him, and now he feels much better about being publicised — so I'll send him back and he'll be much happier.'

With that joyous news I asked about further additions to the Pet People Kit: houses, a facility for extra people and the like. 'The research is still continuing and at the time of this interview I'm still very busy' David said, 'In fact I almost didn't take your call! What we've discovered is that computer persons tend to be solitary people, and once a Pet Person has taken residence in a computer others tend not to come round. If we can discover a way to make them more gregarious then maybe other Pet People **will** be able to come round. We are considering the market for other houses. At the moment your Adam has one of the best ones, but we are certainly considering making other houses which could well bring out different Pet People.'

Might Pet People be found in the new Amiga or the Atari 520ST? David confidently said 'I'm sure there are. We feel that they probably live in every computer in the world. We've found them in other computers, including those that you're asking about, although it does take a while for us to build a house and to get it out to the market. The Commodore was the machine that we worked on first and you've seen the house on that. Following our researches on the Apple IIe, we should have an Apple house available very soon.'

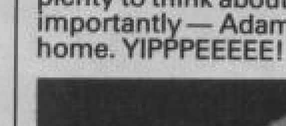
Expanding upon the Amiga subject David said 'we design software generally for any computer that we like, and we like the new machines which have a lot of power like the 68000 microprocessor based computers. They may result in much more detailed graphics and much more diverse software due to the computer's power. We can only wait and see. One thing you can be assured of, is that at Activision we look at every machine which comes out long before many other people have even heard about it. We know exactly what it's capable of and what machines we'll be interested in the future.'

There's no doubt, however, that Activision will be continuing to support the C64. 'We don't intend to stop creating software for the 64, or any other systems we are currently working for. Two existing titles have already been converted for the Amiga, and we plan to do original work for the Amiga as well. The 64 is still one of the strongest computers in the market right now, an there is a strong following for it' Charlotte Taylor, public relations person explained.



With that I thanked them for their time and rang off with plenty to think about. Most importantly — Adam's coming home. YIPPPEEEEE!





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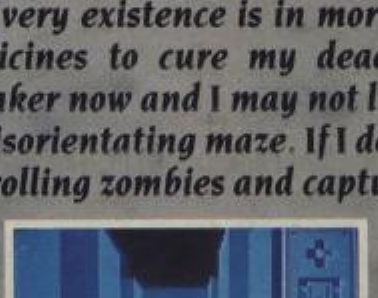
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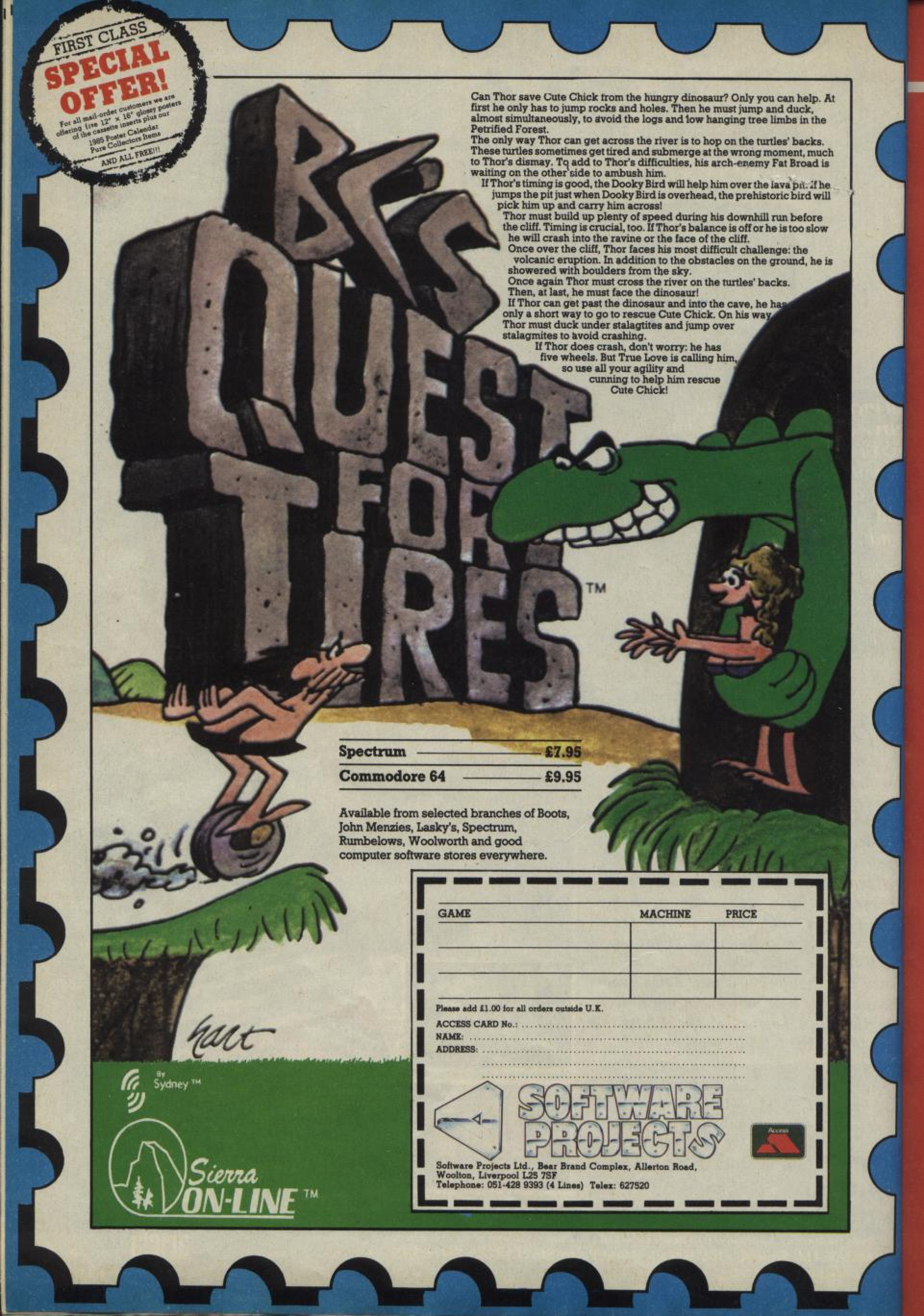
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The only way Thor can get across the river is to hop on the turtles' backs. These turtles sometimes get tired and submerge at the wrong moment, much to Thor's dismay. To add to Thor's difficulties, his arch-enemy Fat Broad is waiting on the other side to ambush him.
If Thor's timing is good, the Dooky Bird will help him over the lava pit. If he jumps the pit just when Dooky Bird is overhead, the prehistoric bird will pick him up and carry him across!
Thor must build up plenty of speed during his downhill run before the cliff. Timing is crucial, too. If Thor's balance is off or he is too slow he will crash into the ravine or the face of the cliff.
Once over the cliff, Thor faces his most difficult challenge: the volcanic eruption. In addition to the obstacles on the ground, he is showered with boulders from the sky.
Once again Thor must cross the river on the turtles' backs. Then, at last, he must face the dinosaur!
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MOHICAN MASHING PART II (IN 5D)

After last months total fiasco I have spent many hours in my
hallucifier replaying my latest home-made epic — *Penn's entrails*
slowly sucked out by Fwoorl the dripping vomit monster (part II in
5D). Many times did I savour his screams and my mind wandered far
from his oozy and disgusting smile.
When I thought myself composed enough I commenced my
monthly search through the multitude of highscore claim forms. I
soon discovered, to my delight, that my call for scores on *Paradroid*
had been answered so I scanned that subsection. My eyes soon
caught the score of a being calling himself **Dan Williams**. I was very
impressed with his score of 37,565, so I ordered a minion to arrange
for his transportation to the Newsfield offices.
On the appointed day Dan arrived. He had travelled from that
primeval hamlet called Lodnod or London or something on a
conveyance called a train. Many of you seem to use this unbel-
ievably primitive form of transport, taking huge delight in comparing
how late one is against another . . .
Dan brought two friends with him for comfort and support which
cheered me somewhat — even if the Rignall was present my
challenger's little mob would still outnumber the terrible twain.
Not wanting to waste time I set out the rules — any number of
games within an hour, the last game started before the time up being
allowed to continue until over.

LET BATTLE COMMENCE!

The games start with the familiar sound of robot bleeping and instantly both players commence their search for higher class robots to control. My challenger plays safe and goes through the droids carefully, transferring to a 296 first of all. Penn, on the other hand, showing his massive big-headedness in classic style, goes straight for a 516 and onto a 742 within a few moments.

Dan on the other hand is rejected when he tries to transfer to a 302 — I ignore the setback and put the mistake down to nerves, since he is a rather a frail and nervous looking human being. He soon recovers and I sit back and watch him transfer to a 476 and follow a course of wholesale destruction until he is forced to transfer to a 711 a few minutes later.

By this time, Penn has been through an orgy of killing little robots (typical of his school bully mentality), through several transfer stages and is currently controlling an 883 with a score of 3,400. At the same time my young challenger is steaming ahead with a score of 5,405. But it is early yet, and I know that *Paradroid* is a game of swings and roundabouts and the scores could well turn . . .

Even as this thought crosses my several minds, I watch the smug faced toad and see he is influencing a 614. With all his teeth showing in a totally inane grin, he zooms around a corner full of confidence and runs straight into the deadly 999 robot, who very sensibly reacts as I would in a similar situation and pumps Penn full of laser fire! HA! Such an incompetent! I thought last month was a complete fluke. He is now showing everyone what a useless twerp he is, 9,995 points indeed! I thought he was supposed to be 'good'.

He restarts the game and I see with satisfaction that he is obviously shaken. My challenger still sails along strongly, piling up the points to reach a score of 14,360.

The piffling Penn suffers (I enjoy) a very short-lived second game, notching up a mere 2,570. His third is even worse — the subnormal ape just scrapes 2,345!!! What a totally useless fool. I relax, ready to enjoy myself.

CALAMITY!

At the 30 minute mark disaster strikes. Penn the Pain is labouring miles behind my challenger who is on a score of 18,400, when Dan's computer crashes! I am totally flummoxed by the absolute unreliability of the Commodore machine. What is wrong with the human race? Can't they even do the simplest things like design a reliable computer?

A coffee break is in order to relax torn nerves so I patiently wait. Suddenly I have an excellent idea and sneak over to Penn's cup in readiness to pour in a noxious substance that I always carry in my third finger. Just as I am about to empty the contents of my knuckle, I spot Rignall in the doorway. The revolting being makes a strange upraised two-fingered gesture which I cannot decode and he wheels the cup away. BAH!

CATCHING UP AND LOSING OUT

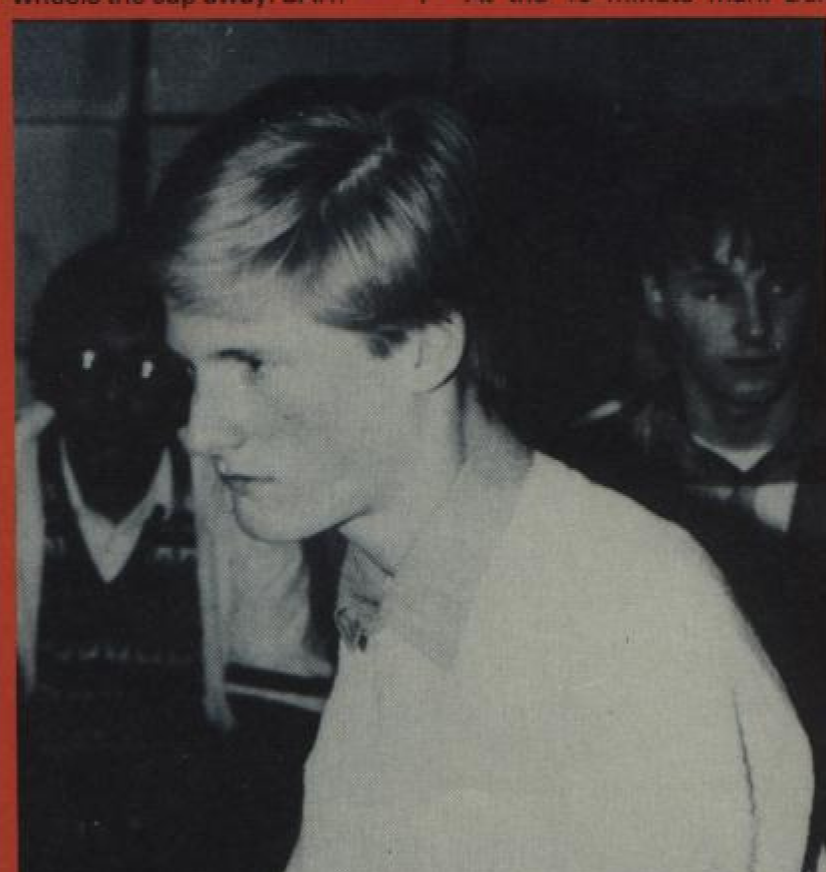
After the break both players start confidently. I hope the genetic freak is still rattled by his previous performance and will make the same mistakes as he made last time. I watch intently . . .

After five minutes some strange noises emanate from Penn. He's been cruising about as a 476 merrily picking on the small fry and blasting them when suddenly he runs out of power. I sit, glued to the screen as he desperately searches for a robot to take over. I pray that all robots are well hidden. The seconds drag and destruction is imminent when the fool stumbles upon a stupid 296 and just manages to scrape through, damn his luck.

I turn my weary eyes to my challenger who is now a 742. He is running rather low on energy as well and so turns to another 742 to transfer. Assuming the transfer will be completed without trouble, I am dumbstruck when I see him rejected. Imbecile! I thought he was supposed to be good at this game. Attempting to recover by going from 001 to 420, he is rejected a second time and consequently burns out. PAH! The useless fool.

Peabrain seems to be going strong with a score of 6,345 whilst my challenger can only notch up a paltry first game score of 4,935.

At the 15 minute mark Dan



Desperately serious, ZZAP! challenger Dan Williams, hailing from the river-side village of London, prepares to do battle.



Penn concentrates, Rignall thinks. The boxes behind JR's pensive brow are full of ZZAP! Binders, but that has no relvance to the steamy Paradroia taking place on screen. . . .

suffers yet another setback. With a score of only 4,900 he emerges from a lift as a 742 and gets ambushed by a 751. In less than a second the game is over and a third on the cards. I resist the urge to leave the room and think on — the time limit is an hour and after that the current game is the last . . . my seemingly useless challenger could well scrape through.

Both competitors play competently, Dan making a concerted effort to catch up with Smug Boots. At the half hour mark, the bane of my life has scored 15,855 whilst my challenger has settled into his third game with a very fast scoring rate to reach 7,315. He keeps turning round nervously to see how the revolting rat scab is getting on. I wish he would keep his eyes on his game.

Moon-faced Penn is still going well and has cleared the first ship with 38 minutes on the clock. I lean back in my chair trying to keep my cool . . .

RUNNING OUT OF TIME

Disaster again strikes heroic Dan, that crash must have really rattled him and luck is just not with him. His third game brings a score of only 11,785 and he starts his fourth and (judging by the time — 42 mins) final game. I see Scumbag's grin reflected in the monitor screen and think about crushing every one of those rotting teeth with a pair of pliers. Better still, crushing them, leaving the nerve ends exposed and then putting sharp, hot . . .

A whistle from Penn's monitor informs me that he's out of power. I watch intently as he searches desperately for a transfer robot. Damn! He finds a 329 and transfers. Seconds later he's rejected as he tries for a 476 and is returned to a 001. I send my thought waves out to all the robots on the ship telling them that the invader is defenceless, to go and destroy him. Within seconds two 476s appear round the corner and let rip before he's got a chance to react. I look at his score — 25,560. A formidable, but not impossible score for my challenger to beat.

With 53 minutes on the clock Mr Massive Ego starts his second game. I'm sickened by his disgustingly relaxed attitude, leaning back in the chair feet on table, the sort of slouched attitude he would doubtless adopt in a train. I'd like to relax him by removing his muscles — that would be quite amusing. I glance over to see how Dan is getting on. He too seems relaxed and is consistently massacring heaps of robots with the help of a 742 body.

At the hour I settle back. It's going to be a long wait — either player could win . . . it's what I like to see — a battle of nerves and skill!

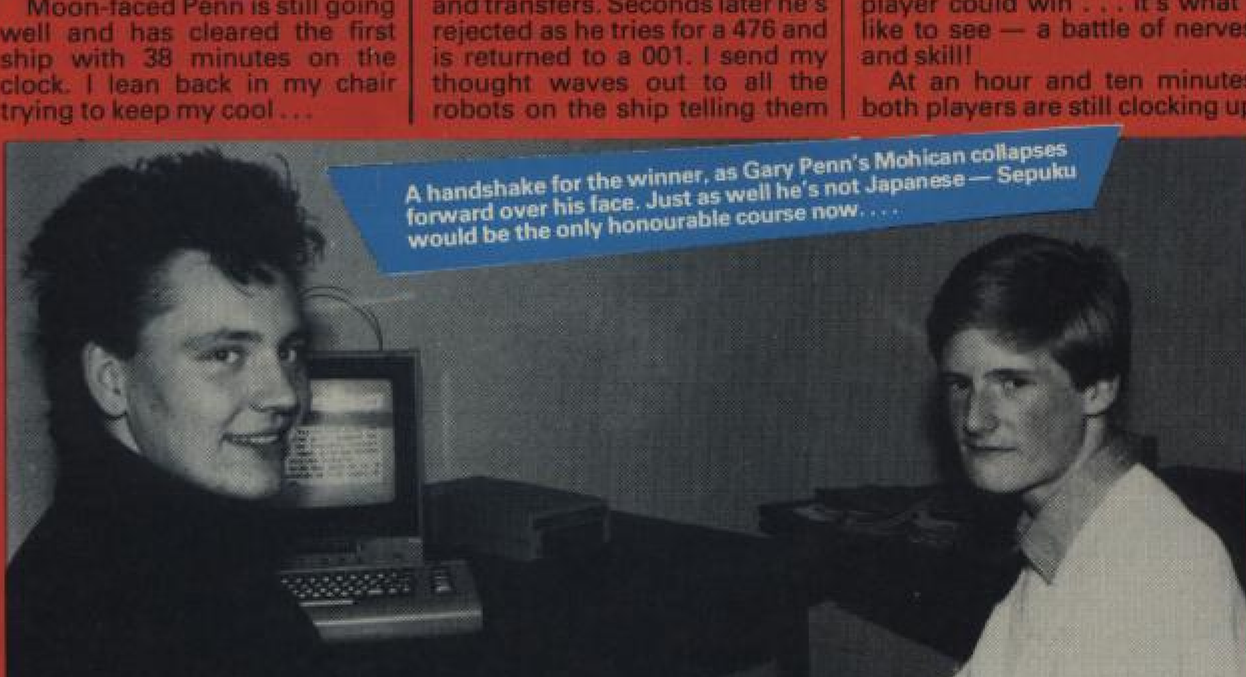
At an hour and ten minutes both players are still clocking up consistently — Swell Head with 10,735 and my challenger with 18,155. My hearts start to beat faster . . . can my challenger pull up the score??? I sit on the edge of my chair.

A few minutes later and Dan is in trouble. Trundling about as a 711 and blasting everything in sight he runs into a 302 and in his confusion goes into transfer mode. I wait impatiently for him to work his way back up to a more powerful robot, but I needn't have worried — after disposing of two minor droids, the game announces that the ship has been cleared with a score of 21,680.

The second ship poses early problems, however — transferring from 420 to 420 he is rejected and spends several nerve rending minutes searching for a suitable robot to take over. Just as my hearts are about to burst a swift set of transfers from 001 to 296 and then to 516 brings him into contact with the 999 droid. With swift reactions, he goes instantly into transfer mode, takes it over and spends many minutes destroying everything which crosses his path. With his score at 24,905 I turn to see how the Porky One is faring. As I swivell in my chair I see the 'cleared ship' screen come up. With a score of 21,395 he seems to be catching up with my challenger.

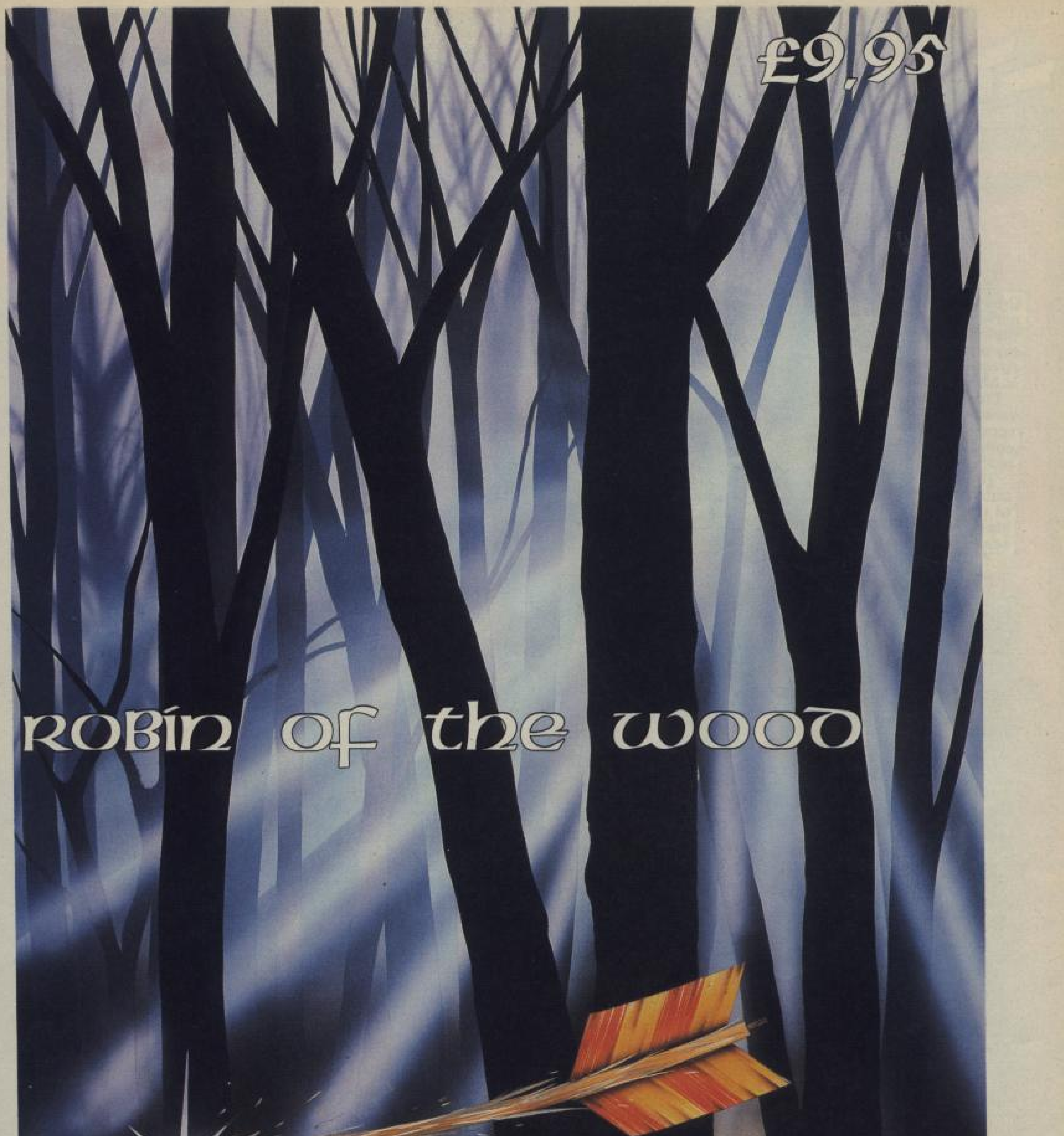
A murmur from the challenger's harem informs me that he's passed the vile Penn's score. If only he can hang on . . .

Penn's score is at 25,005 when he runs into trouble as a 711. As he emerges from a lift he is surrounded by three series 8 droids . . . and is blasted to smithereens!!! A quick look at Dan's score confirms it . . . he has won. At 31,025 he is the victor. For the second time in three months I have won! Revenge is sweet!!



A handshake for the winner, as Gary Penn's Mohican collapses forward over his face. Just as well he's not Japanese — Sepuku would be the only honourable course now. . . .





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CHALLENGE

THE SCORELORD SPEAKETH



Greetings my wondrous and numerous fans. I have spent a nerve-wracking month trying to escape this month's turmoil in the offices. It seems whenever I give Newsfield the privilege of my presence they are busily running around trying to get these Amstrad 'computers' to work, since the latest fad in the office is AMTIX! magazine.

I'm not sure whether they'll try to have the equivalent of my amazing highscore tables, but tell your friends to send in scores regardless . . . else other mags with highscore tables could make claims that they have a superior gameplaying readership.

The same goes for YOU . . . I want you to keep playing and outscoring all the other magazines. I only control the most elite of ranks and I will have no qualms about flying my module elsewhere if my ranks start to turn in pathetic and feeble scores.

YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.

1985 (Mastertronic)
22,982 Neil Rolls, Wethersfield, Essex
19,250 Stephen Sherlock, Wirral, Merseyside
19,159 Derek Holmes, Wallasey, Merseyside

ACTION BIKER/CLUMSY COLIN (Mastertronic)
267,139 Colin Box, Brampton, Cumbria
265,503 Jason Belcher, Witney, Oxon
263,410 Chris Russel, Rotherham, S Yorks

BLUE MAX (US (Gold)
26,420 Neil Robinson, Wellingboro', Northants
24,750 Michael Woodman, LLansamlet, Swansea
22,860 Stephen Roberts, Lower Froyle, Hampshire

BEACH HEAD (US Gold)
838,200 Michael Chappell, Kent
808,000 Peter Mason, Inverness
756,000 Carlton Walls, Norwich

BEACH HEAD II (US Gold)
1,285,400 Robert Henwood, Bridgewater, Somerset.
1,248,000 Barry Nicholou, Reading, Berks
1,163,400 Stuart Brewster, Middleton, Manchester.

BOUNTY BOB (US Gold)
8,585,600 Kristin Keegan, Kilmarnoch, Ayrshire
414,300 Alan Riddiough, Saltburn, Cleveland
339,000 Michael Orwel, Bognor Regis, W Sussex

BLACHWYCHE (Ultimate)
Finished 0.53 Martin Royle, Liverpool

CAD CAM WARRIOR (Taskset)
121,053 Marc Childerhouse, Ashmanhaugh, Norwich
6,175 Mark Coleman, Blackburn, Lancs
3,251 Philip Desmond, Chelmsford, Essex

CRAZY COMETS (Martech)
25,620 Gary Penn, ZZAP!
14,780 Julian Rignall, ZZAP!

CONFUZION (Incentive)
31,145 Colin Box, Brampton, Cumbria
28,475 Mark Taylor, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex.
21,870 Julian Rignall, ZZAP!

CAULDRON (Palace)
1,113,475 Simon Anforth, London
160,000 Darren Smith, Suffolk
31,250 Gary Penn, ZZAP!

CHICKEN CHASE (Firebird)
3,691,180 Colin Box, Brampton, Cumbria
973,425 D J Murray, Hoveringham, Notts
923,643 Paul Yendall, Exeter, Devon

CYBOTRON (Anirog)
3,652,500 Richard Barker, Leeds
1,250,000 Stephen Blidgeon, Manchester
436,200 James Thomas, Fishguard, Dyfed

DEFENDER (Atarisoft)
3,115,350 Ian Carrel, Langstone Hants
3,005,675 Gareth Baron, Tyne and Wear. 3,000,150 Julian Rignall, ZZAP!

DIG DUG (US Gold)
999,400 Sherif Salama, Cairo, Egypt
879,500 Julian Rignall, ZZAP!
175,000 Philip Desmond, Colchester, Essex

DAVID'S MIDNIGHT MAGIC (Ariolasoft)
1,342,310 M Watkins, Newport, Gwent
1,222,210 Malcom Stretton, Berkhamstead, Herts
598,530 Gary Penn, ZZAP!

DROPZONE (UK Gold)
3,246,980 M Orwell, Bognor Regis, W Sussex
2,028,780 Peter Mcarthy, Weston-S-Mare, Avon
1,759,030 Gavin Tait, Glasgow

EVIL DEAD (Palace Video)
953,200 S Jackson, Northwich, Cheshire

ENTOMBED (Ultimate)
Fin. 0.36 Mark Wilson, Durham
Fin. 0.38 Gary Penn, ZZAP!
Fin. 0.40 Julian Rignall, ZZAP!

ENCOUNTER (Novagen)
632,000 Julian Venus, Winchester
586,000 Julian Rignall, ZZAP!
506,500 Jason Mitchell, Inverclyde

FRANKIE GOES TO HOLLYWOOD (Ocean)
87,000 Gary Sampson, Stratford, London.
87,000 Darren Mudd, Middlesbro', Cleveland.
86,700 Gary Penn, ZZAP!

FINDERS KEEPERS (Mastertronic
£2708.67 Simon Wright, Gosport, Hants

GUARDIAN (Alligata)
1,020,950 Julian Rignall, ZZAP!
592,600 Andy Moss, Coventry
467,350 Khalid Mirza, London

GHOSTBUSTERS (Activision)
$52,000 Craig Dibble, Droitwich
$46,500 Rachel Watson, Aberystwyth, Dyfed
$45,000 Warren Minton, Luton, Herts

GRIBBLY'S DAY OUT (Hewson Consultants)
12,137 Colin Box, Brampton, Cumbria
10,949 Bradley Cole, Downend, Bristol
10,381 Stuart Brewster, Middleton, Manchester.

HYPERSPORTS (Imagine)
175,512 Norman Stevens, Stratford-On-Avon, Warks
153,938 Julian Rignall, ZZAP!
145,165 Stewart Brewster, Manchester

JUMPMAN (Epyx)
156,300 Paul Campbell, N Ireland

KONG STRIKES BACK (Ocean)
2,071,210 Drew Roger, Dunbartonshire, Scotland
2,030,795 Jonathan Smith, Newport, Gwent

MR DO (US Gold)
4,652,600 Russel Marsh, Mansfield, Notts
4,612,500 Steven Bately, LLanalli, S Wales
3,148,600 Tim Peggs, Scarborough, N Yorks

NIGHT MISSION PINBALL (Sub Logic)
38,234,230 M O'Reilly, Rishton, Lancs
10,783,460 Julian Rignall, ZZAP!
3,586,560 Gary Penn, ZZAP!

PITFALL II (Activision)
199,000 Mark Hardy, Norwich, Norfolk
199,000 Mark Bishop, Hemel Hempstead, Herts

2PASTFINDER (Activision)
380,190 Jonathan Bethell, Eaton Bishop, Herefordshire
342,690 Paul Montague, Eaton Bishop, Herefordshire
269,525 James Callaghan, Skelmersdale, Lancs

POLE POSITION (US Gold)
134,650 Julian Rignall, ZZAP!
130,360 Daniel Shannon, Bootham, York
124,150 Kevin Munrow, Tenterden, Kent

PARADROID (Hewson Consultants)
41,892 Gary Penn, ZZAP!
37,565 Dan Williams, London
35,425 Julian Rignall, ZZAP!

QUO VADIS (The Edge)
2,967,100 Michael Bradshaw, Gomeral, Cleckheaton
2,750,650 Michael Shaw, Dunkin, Cheshire
1,665,800 Tom McKee, Ross-Shire

ROLAND'S RAT RACE (Ocean)
137,710 Wayne Atkinson, Warley, W Mids
94,950 Beverley Turnbull, Colchester, Essex
47,400 Mark Taylor, Stanford-le-Hope, Essex

ROCK 'N' BOLT (Activision)
$340,189.40 Nicholas Birds, Buxton, Derbyshire
$136,905.25 Jaz/Gaz (relay), ZZAP!
$21,377.25 M O'Reilly, Rishton, Lancs

RESCUE ON FRACTALUS (Activision)
296,498 T N Branston, Cropwell Butler, Notts
255,897 Matthew Clark, Sutton, Surrey
158,954 Rachel Watson, Aberystwyth, Dyfed

ROCKFORD'S RIOT (Monolith)
32,913 Julian Rignall, ZZAP!
21,924 Michael Savage, Norwich, Norfolk

RASKEL (Budgie)
210,800 Julian Rignall, ZZAP!

RAID ON BUNGELING BAY (Ariolasoft)
146,200 Glenn Vyse, Irnham, Lincs
142,850 Stuart Brewster, Middleton, Manchester
111,300 Paul Riceman, Ilford, Essex

STAR WARS (Parker Bros)
126,642,160 Richard Cosgrove, Nottingham
100,366,474 M Woolford, Yeadon, Leeds
50,074,963 Paul Baker, Swindon, Wilts

SLINKY (US Gold)
100,000,000 Julian Rignall, ZZAP!
918,000 Zeno Winkens, Currucloe, Co Wexford

SUPER ZAXXON (US Gold)
55,900 Julian Rignall, ZZAP!

SUPER PIPELINE II (Taskset)
128,400 Warren Craigie, Edinburgh
116,200 Julian Rignall, ZZAP!

THING ON A SPRING (Gremlin Graphics)
13,257 Andrew Grifo, Worsley, Manchester
13,247 Michael Kinsman, Morden, Surrey.
8,953 Gary Penn, ZZAP!

TOY BIZZARE (Activision)
603,760 J Mclean, Rhonuda, Mid Glam
599,200 Philip Wilson, Belfast
104,240 Gareth Baron, Tyne and Wear

WIZARD OF WOR (Commodore)
345,000 Kevin Adamson, Peterborough
295,700 Robert Crossman, Taunton, Somerset
202,000 Julian Rignall, ZZAP!

WHO DARES WINS II (Alligata)
31,100 Julian Rignall, ZZAP!

WIZARDRY (The Edge)
12,800 Andrew Grifo, Walkdern, Worsley
7,100 Julian Rignall ZZAP!

UP 'N' DOWN (US Gold)
212,350 Rachel Watson, Aberystwyth, Dyfed
198,830 Khamsin Toobi, Wolverhampton
183,890 Michael Murray, Birmingham

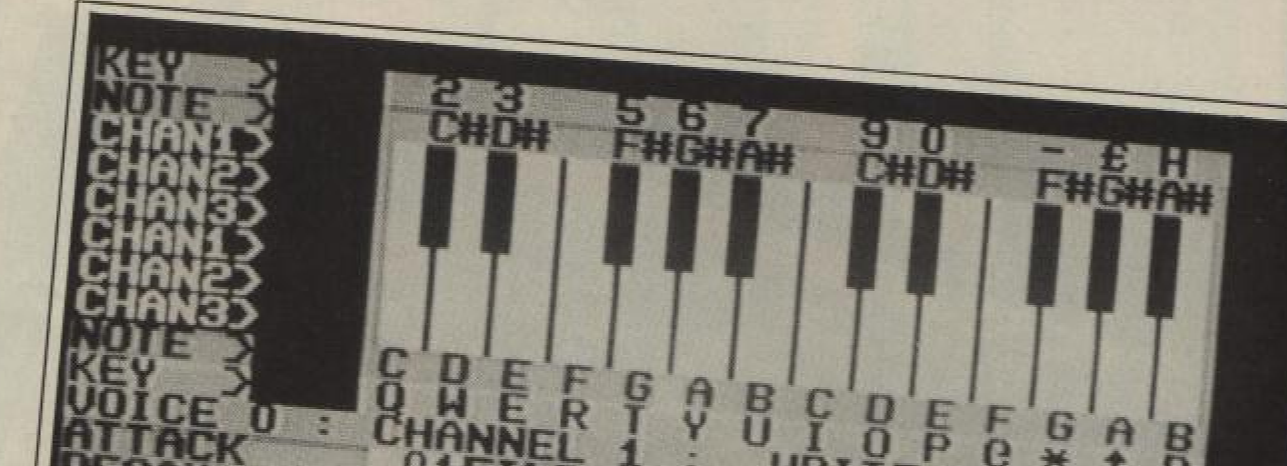


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DECEMBER

FUNKY BOP CORNER

Julian Rignall, ZZAP!'s resident sound generator ploughs his way through the multitude of features of one of the best music utilities to hit the 64.



When toddling past the Orpheus stand at the PCW show my lugholes caught the strains of an excellent version of the *Young Ones* theme tune belting out of a 64. Intrigued by this I collared the insane John Marshall for more information. 'Oh, it was done using our new music utility' said he, so I instantly asked for one. After parting with a ZZAP! T-shirt for a copy (what a rip-off) I thundered back to my hotel room to try it out, and decided that I hadn't been conned. I've now had *Electrosound* for over a month now and I'm still only just discovering what can be done with it.

Electrosound has been designed for use by people with varying musical knowledge and comes complete with 50 preset voices and 24 drum and percussion sounds. There are five different modes, each with a separate function which can be used either to play the computer like a proper synthesizer or create tunes:—

MANUAL PLAY

This is the mode that is best tried when the program is first encountered. What this mode does is turn the 64 into a miniature synthesizer, all the keys on the top two rows of the computer act as a two octave musical keyboard. *Electrosound* is fully compatible with the Commodore *Music Maker* keyboard overlay so if there's a spare one lying around put it over the top to make playing a little more realistic (and easier).

There are nine keyboard play modes which are put into three categories — mono, poly and unis (unison). When in mono 1 mode, a key pressed plays a note with the voice defined for channel one only. Mono 2 mode plays the channel two voice and mode three channel three. In this mode it is possible only to play single notes. With poly mode up to three combinations of notes can be played making it more like a proper synthesizer. Unis mode is similar to mono mode only a combination of voices sound when a single note is pressed. Using this mode harmonies of three different voices can be created at the single press of a key.

The keyboard can be 'keyed up' by using the transpose parameter — this element determines the note range of the keyboard. Normally the bottom note starts at C but it can be changed to start at D sharp, E or whatever. In transpose mode the octave of the keyboard can also be changed, so playing high or low octaves is possible.

When in manual play mode it is possible to define and create new voices. When a new sound is required the write protect should first be turned off by pressing F2. Then a cursor can be moved through all the sound parameter and modulation values using F5 and F7. To change those values use the F3 key (or F4 to change that value by ten).

There are the basic ADSR (attack, decay, sustain release) parameters which each have 15 settings. You can also select the wave type from the 15 variables provided (pulse, sawtooth, sin, noise and combinations of them all). To customize the voice further the pulse width can be defined to make it more mellow or harsher. If unis mode is being used then it might be useful to toggle with the detune parameter. This changes the voices in both channel two and three, detuning channel two just below the channel one note and channel three above. This gives a much 'fatter' and more spacious sound.

Each sound channel has two built-in filters which can be switched on and off and there are separate low, medium and high frequency filters which can also be switched on or off. If a filter is used then then the cutoff parameter can be defined to make the filter come into action at a certain frequency. The resonance parameter can be used in conjunction with the cutoff to emphasise the cutoff frequencies and therefore give a distinctive tone to the sound.

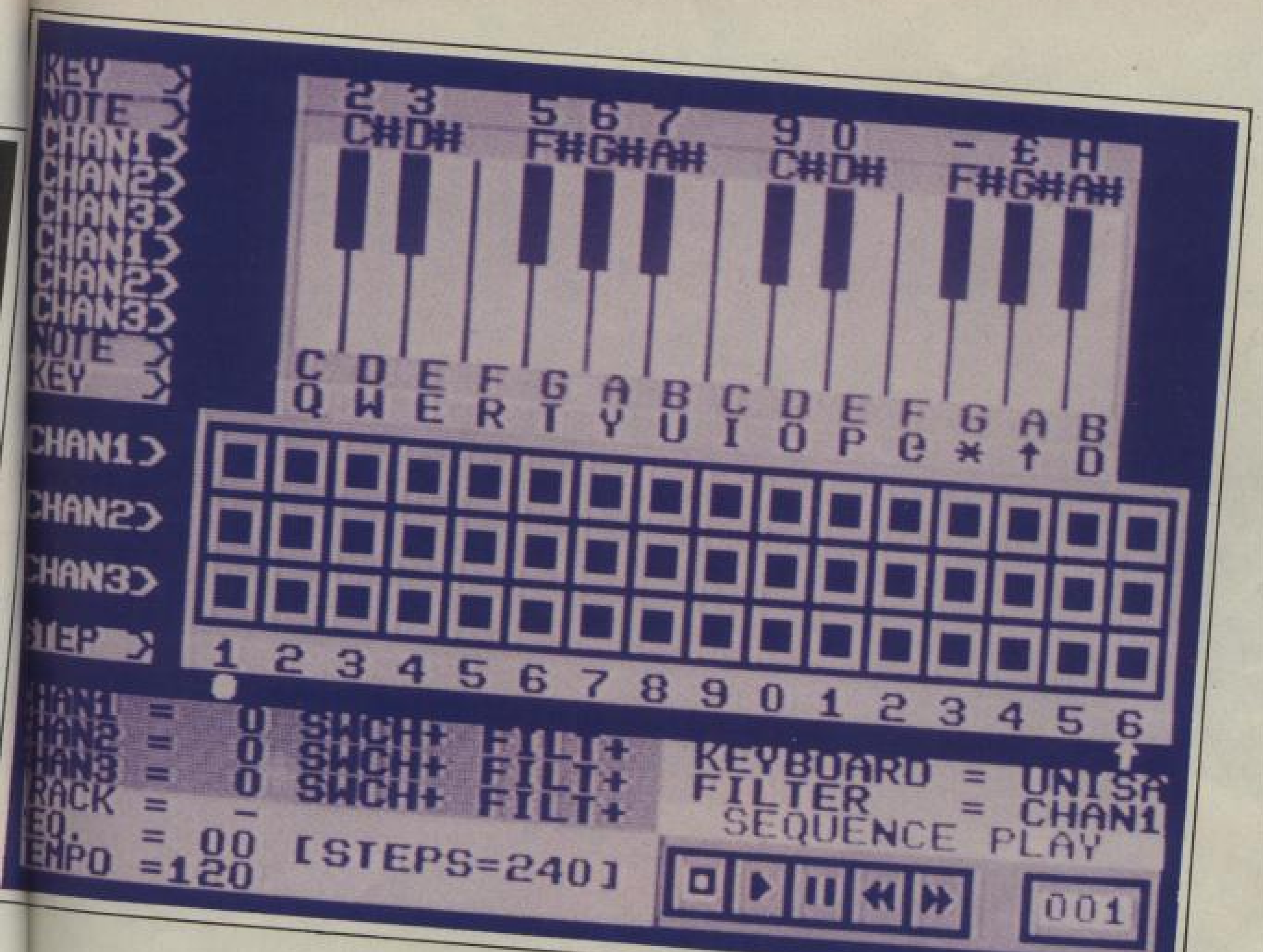
Electrosound allows extensive modulation to a voice and using the following parameters some incredible sound customisation can be made (like pitch slides).

There are five modulation parameters — vibrato, PWM (pulse width modulation), pitchbend, autotrigger and cutoff. Vibrato causes the pitch of the note to be constantly changed and produces an effect similar to an acoustic instrument such as a clarinet. PWM is similar to vibrato being a cyclic modulation. It causes the width of the pulse waveform to vary above and below the defined pulse width of the voice. The result of using pitchbend will cause a voice to 'slide' upwards or downwards or become a much harsher type of vibrato with a bigger cyclic effect. Autotrigger constantly retriggers the ADSR element of the voice repeating it constantly if a key is held down. When the cutoff is put into action the filter's cutoff frequency can be varied creating such effects as 'wah-wah'.

Each parameter has four values (trigger, rate, depth and direction) which can be used in conjunction with the five parameters and can be defined to determine when pitch and mod-

ELECTROSOUND

Orpheus, £14.95 cass or disk, keys



ulation come into action. Trigger mode can only be used with NTM (see below) whilst rate determines how fast modulation occurs. The depth setting is used to define how far modulation goes before changing course and direction is used to start the modulation from a certain point. There is also an option which allows S/H (sample and hold) to be used with depth. This setting constantly changes the numbers being fed into the voice parameter giving a 'random' synth noise.

There are also two other values, modulation delay and note trigger mode. Modulation delay determines how much time elapses between a note being pressed and modulation occurring whilst NTM is used to determine whether this delay is operative before every note is played or only before the first one.

When using manual play, voices can be defined for use in any sort of tune that can be created by using the sequence and track write options.

SEQUENCE WRITE

When using this mode very professional sounding sequences can be created for use with the track write option. The way tunes are written using *Electrosound* is quite unusual compared with other music utilities. First of all sequences are written which are then arranged using the track write. This way completely different styles of tunes can all be merged together to form almost an overture!

When writing, rather than having a musical stave and putting notes onto it the stave is represented by a 240 x 3 grid, each sound channel taking up one line of the grid. To create a tune just point the arrow icon to the first square of the grid and put in a note by pressing a key note on the musical 'keyboard'. A note can be put in for each of the three channels or, if desired, a rest can be put in simply by pressing the space bar. Once a chord has been created the sequence can be advanced one step and more notes added. With this process up to 240 three-note chords can be created per sequence. If there isn't enough space to put a full tune in just create another sequence and put them together with track write.

The beauty of this program is that drum sounds can be placed in any space no matter what channel, just plonk them in wherever there's a rest.

When the sequence is finished go to . . .

SEQUENCE PLAY

Which allows the tune to be listened to without erasing it. This mode acts like a tape recorder— using BNM<> as stop, play, pause, rewind, fast forward it is possible to listen or skip through parts of the tune. In this mode the tempo of the tune can also be changed to add higher resolution to the sound.

TRACK WRITE

This is represented as a large yellow grid where sequence numbers can be arranged and entered. Each of the ten rows can hold ten tracks giving huge potential for writing almost endless tunes.

TRACK PLAY

This works in the same way as sequence play with the same 'tape recorder' controls, only this time the entire tune with all its sequences can be heard. If the tune comes out slightly wrong then just go back to the track play and correct it.

Electrosound allows storage of voices on both tape and disk and comes complete with a set of demo tunes (which are excellent). The instructions are detailed and explain exactly what each of the functions do. The only trouble is that reading the instructions is a necessity and could well put off a novice, although it is possible just to tinker with the program and get to know the ways around it without detailed reading.

This is an absolutely superb utility, is unsurpassed in my eyes (ears)? There is massive potential for a professional musician and the most incredible tunes can be easily created. Some of the sounds it is possible to create really have to be heard to be believed. Slides that only Rob Hubbard could create are now, with practice, possible to muster. The sequence write does take a little getting used to but then a flick through the instructions should put you on the right track. If you like playing tunes or want to have a bash at creating your own, then you can't really go wrong with Electrosound.

Presentation 82%
Instructions may seem a bit confusing to a novice. Compatible with Commodore *Music Maker* clip-on keyboard.

Ease of Use 93%
Once initial problems are over it's a doddle to use.

Sound Capabilities 99%
Limited only by the user's abilities. Built in voices are excellent, and once users becomes familiar with what they are doing some really professional voices can be made.

Value For Money 98%
Miles better than any music utility in its class and puts the more expensive ones to shame.

Overall 97%
An incredible music utility, reasonably easy to use and most professional in its sound and capabilities.

wizard

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wizard

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MAX *****

YOUR 64, OCT 1985.







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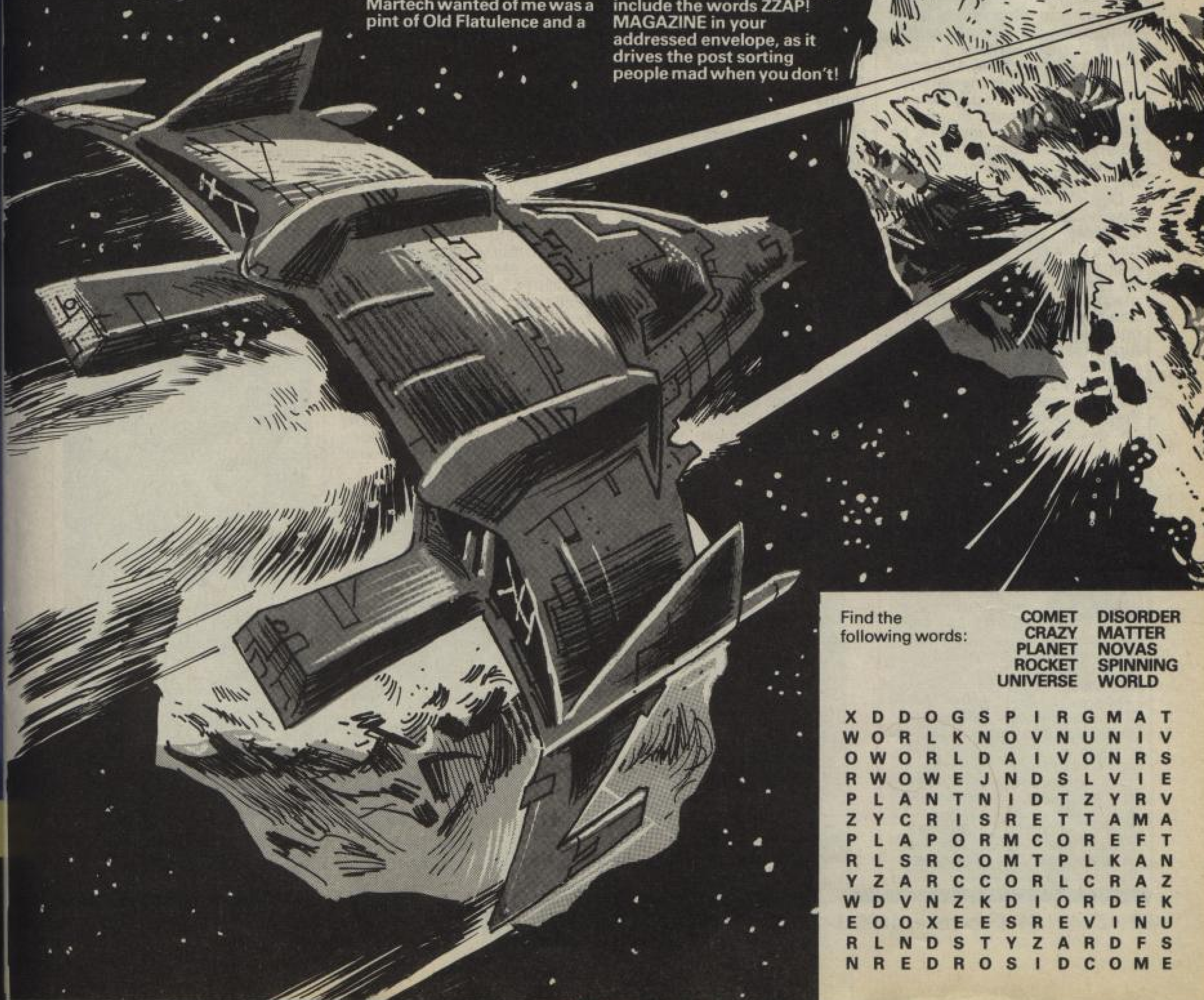
ZZAP! COMP

Stay alive for as long as you can by blasting everything in sight out of sight! And why not, the Universe is out of control, contracting into chaos, matter is turning into energy in a chain reaction of disorder — so is this the time to be squeamish?

Planets rush towards you, comets fly overhead and general mayhem embroils you as Rob Hubbard's symphony keeps all the action on the move!

It all sounds frighteningly active for a simple-minded, pacifist competition minion, so you can appreciate how glad I was to discover that all Martech wanted of me was a pint of Old Flatulence and a wordsearch square to test your brains. Only the brightest of sparks are allowed in space to shoot planets and things, and we're looking for 50.

So put your thinking caps on (whatever they are) and discover the hidden position of the ten words which are deeply and cunningly hidden within the confines of the wordsquare below. Ring them round and hurtle your entry to **CRAZY COMETS, ZZAP! MAGAZINE, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB** to reach us by December 16th latest. PLEASE remember to include the words ZZAP! MAGAZINE in your addressed envelope, as it drives the post sorting people mad when you don't!



Find the following words:

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CRAZY
PLANET
ROCKET
UNIVERSE
DISORDER
MATTER
NOVAS
SPINNING
WORLD

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W	O	R	L	K	N	O	V	N	U	N	I	V
O	W	O	R	L	D	A	I	V	O	N	R	S
R	W	O	W	E	J	N	D	S	L	V	I	E
P	L	A	N	T	N	I	D	T	Z	Y	R	V
Z	Y	C	R	I	S	R	E	T	T	A	M	A
P	L	A	P	O	R	M	C	O	R	E	F	T
R	L	S	R	C	O	M	T	P	L	K	A	N
Y	Z	A	R	C	C	O	R	L	C	R	A	Z
W	D	V	N	Z	K	D	I	O	R	D	E	K
E	O	O	X	E	E	S	R	E	V	I	N	U
R	L	N	D	S	T	Y	Z	A	R	D	F	S
N	R	E	D	R	O	S	I	D	C	O	M	E

ZZAP! TEST





This is a rather strange game. When you first see it the things that quickly attract your attention the most are the two Adolf Hitlers goose-stepping (or doing the Can-Can) around the screen. The game is a bit of an oddity too — you spend the whole time rushing around the screen pulling and pushing switches which your twin brother promptly promptly goes and mucks up. There's not much depth in the game either, as there are only five screens to complete before you start again on a higher level. It provides a few hours of fun but is nothing particularly special.

SCHIZOFRENIA

Quicksilva, £7.95 cass, joystick or keys

Schizophrenia is a game that will put you in two minds about paranoia (ho! ho!), well that's roughly what it says on the inlay anyway. You take the role of one Alphonse T Nurd, flunky and cleaning minion to Bogdan Schtunk, a run of the mill mad scientist. Alphonse, discontent with his menial position, dreams of one day becoming a great scientist. So, during his night-time cleaning shift, he attempts to learn as much as possible about his employer's line of work.

One night while Alphonse is playing at being a scientist he stumbles across his Dr Schtunk's latest invention, the Atomic Particle People Splitter. He unwittingly activates the machine and is promptly split into two separate people, Alphonse I and Alphonse II. Oh dear. Alphonse I quickly realises his mistake and that he must get himself and his double to the Recombination Chamber so they can become as one again. To get there he must travel through the five areas of Dr Schtunk's lab complex. Unfortunately for Alphonse I, Alphonse II isn't quite so keen on the idea as he is enjoying his new found freedom and will attempt to hinder his alter-ego's every step. To make matters worse, if the labs aren't clean by first thing in the morning then it's the sack for Alphonse T Nurd — both of them!

The five areas of lab are of the platform and ladders format and each features a certain type of 'logic puzzle' to be completed. You actually control Alphonse I and compete against Alphonse II using either joystick or keyboard. Loading is briefly interrupted to allow you to choose the control method and there's no way of changing this once the program has loaded (other than re-loading).

On the first screen, appropriately titled Area One, you have to open the main doors leading to (surprise, surprise) Area Two. This involves undoing four bolts holding the doors shut and pulling back a lever to swing them apart. Score and timer controls must also be set by toggling the correct switches below their respective panels. If this all sounds too easy then bear in mind that while you are doing this, Alphonse II wanders about the screen attempting to reset any work that you've done.

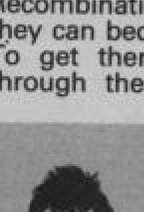
Should you be unfortunate enough to bump into your alter-ego he will give you a swift kick in the leg to send you on your way, before continuing on his. If you encounter him on a top landing however, he's more than likely to send you crashing to the floor, costing you one of your three lives.

Area Two has you moving several little yellow boxes to the top right of the screen by using a set of lifts in the middle. You can only move so many blocks at a time and the correct lift controls must be activated if they are to work. Area Three requires plenty of thought as you have to line up six sets of lifts at the bottom of the screen and they only move in sets of three. The penultimate screen, Area Four, is another logic problem with the task of turning on all the lights in the room. Before you can do that though, the generator has to be turned on and to make things that bit more awkward, one of the light-switches has been wired upside down!

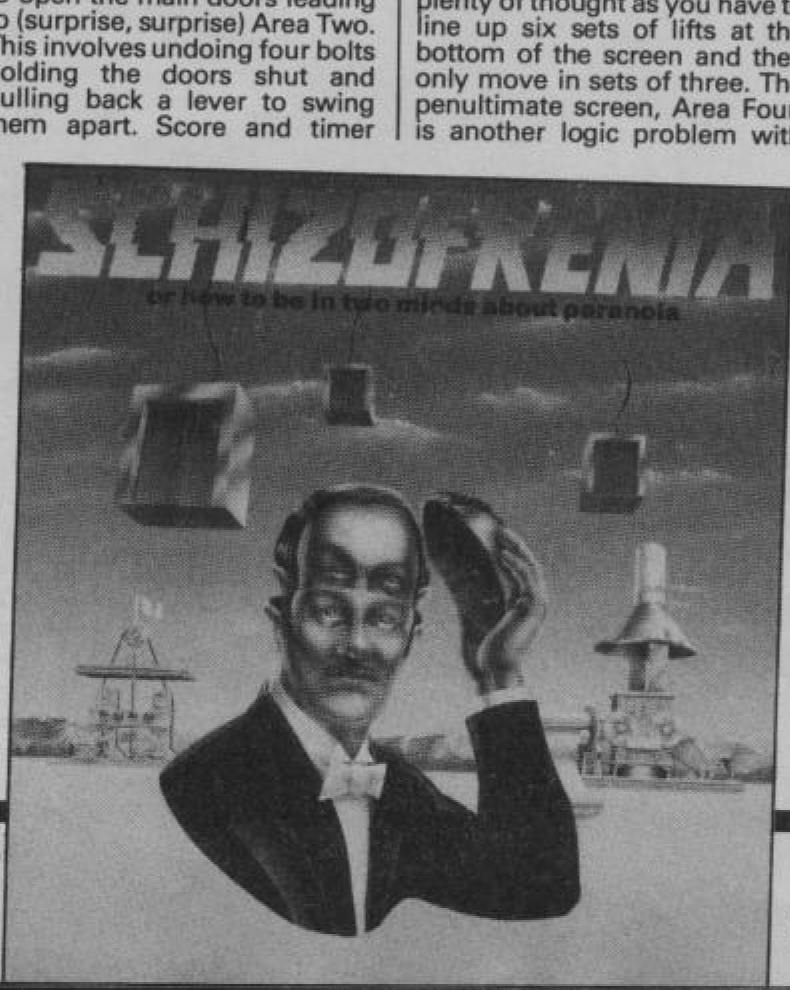
The final screen contains the Recombination Chamber itself and features yet more switches and frustration. A series of generators need to be turned on to activate the machine so that Alphonse II can be lured into it and the two bodies combined to form one.



There are two major problems with this game. Firstly, there are only five different screens and secondly, they're far too difficult. Making a game harder to compensate for a lack of levels is one thing, but Schizofrenia is just fastidious. This is unfortunate since it's mainly the control of Alphonse that is a pain — the problems posed on each screen aren't.



From the once great Quicksilva comes an aardvark of unusally limited scope. It has five screens. And five relatively unchallenging screens at that. Control over Alphonse is abominable, involving pixel perfect positioning before any move is made. The program is so finicky it is unbelievable. Time after time Alphonse tumbled off the staircase for no apparent reason. The backgrounds, though fairly detailed, are muddy and the use of porky expanded sprites makes the animation look particularly crude. Overall, despite the relatively interesting scenario, Quicksilva must be the ones suffering from mental disorders.



Presentation 49%
Decent packaging but game lacks in appearance and options.

Graphics 57%
Quite crude both in definition and animation.

Sound 39%
Poor tune and run of the mill sound FX.

Hookability 59%
Control demands frustrate interest.

Lastability 44%
Despite tough and imaginative puzzles there are only 5 screens.

Value For Money 54%
There's not really enough on offer even for the reasonable price.

Overall 50%
We'd be in two minds about recommending this one.





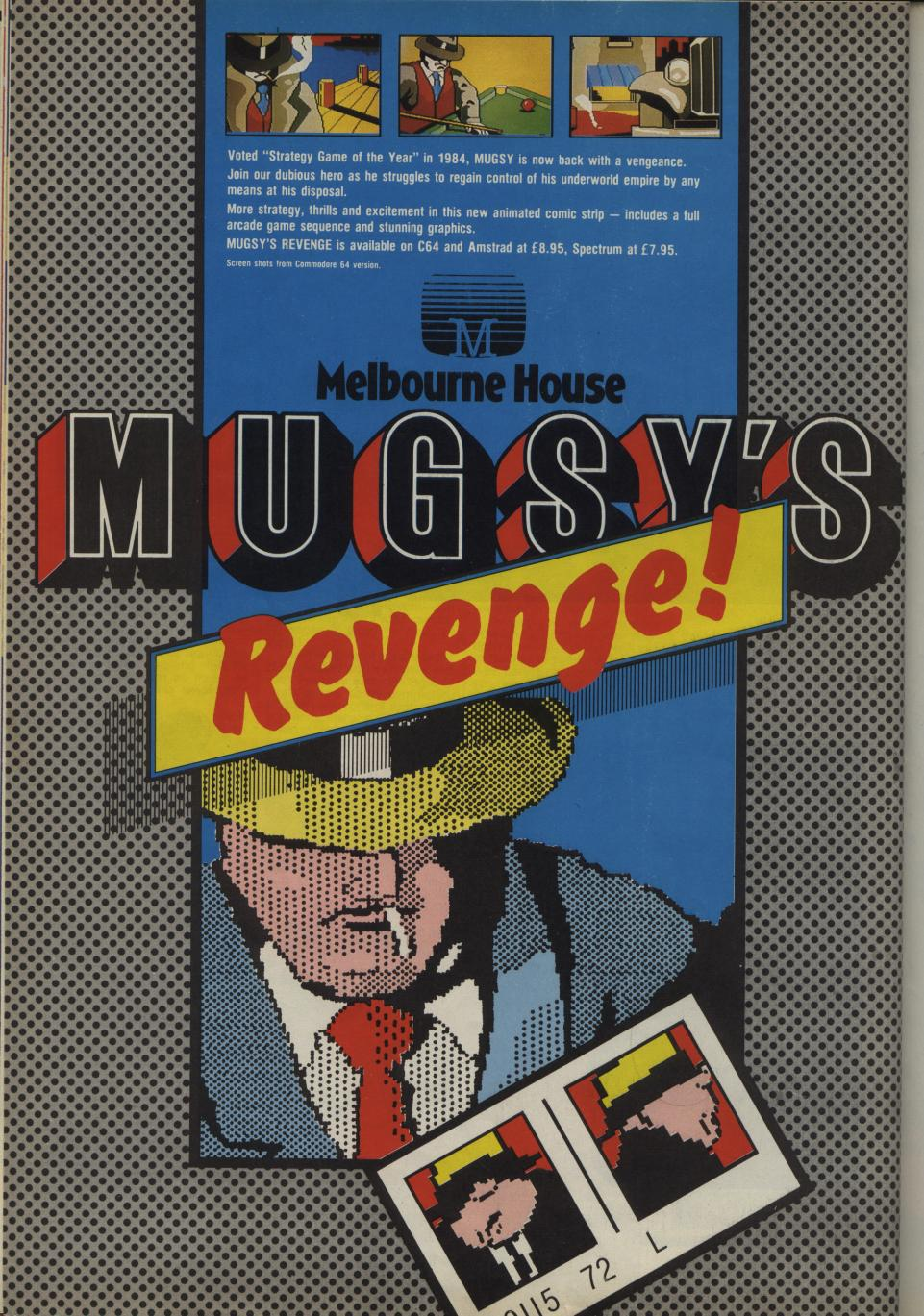
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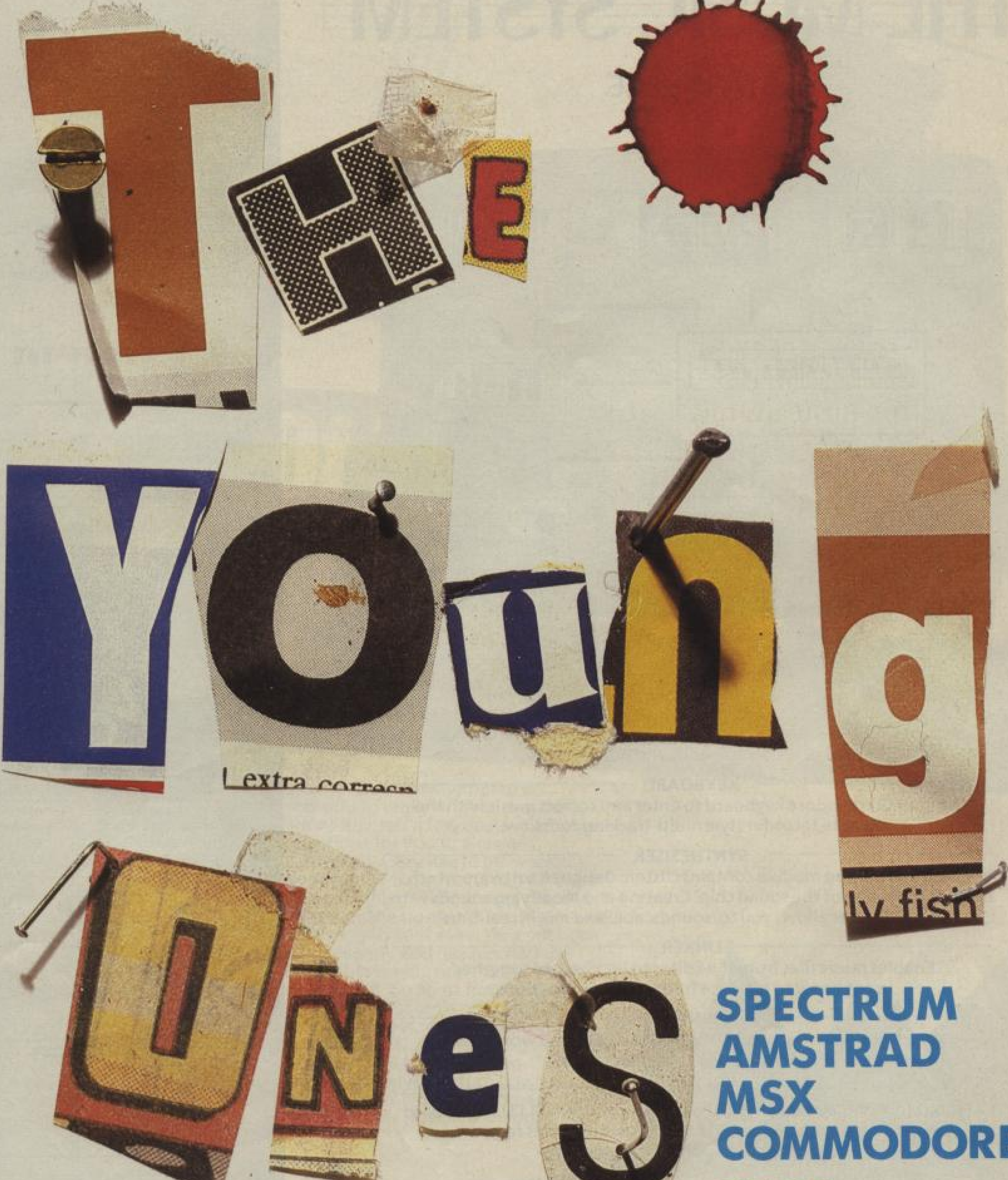
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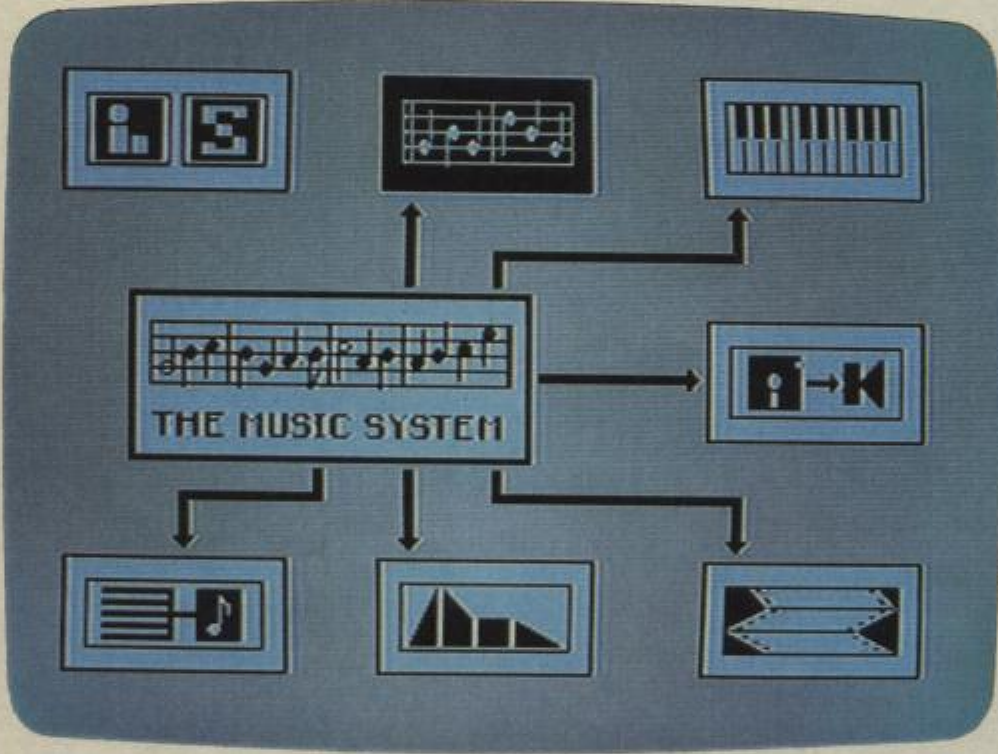
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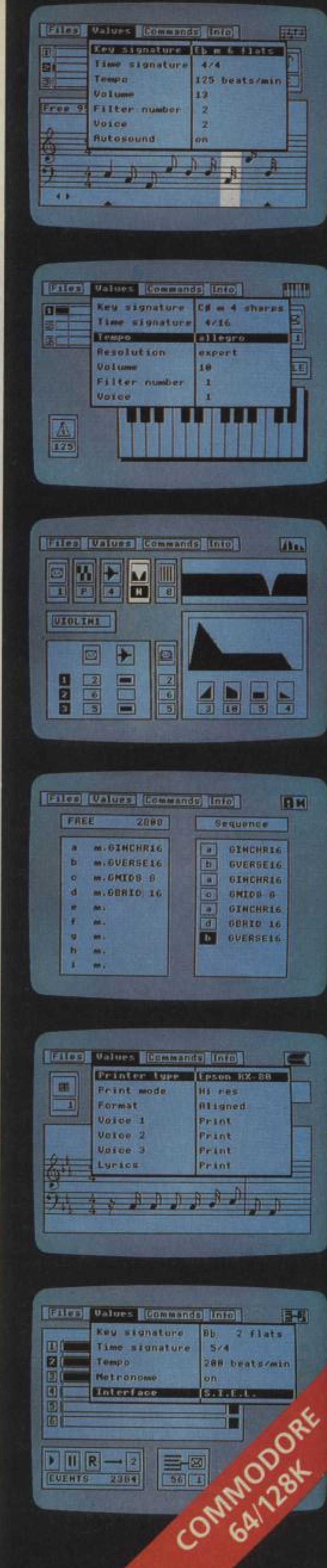
The Advanced Music System will be available on November 5th 1985 (Disc only).
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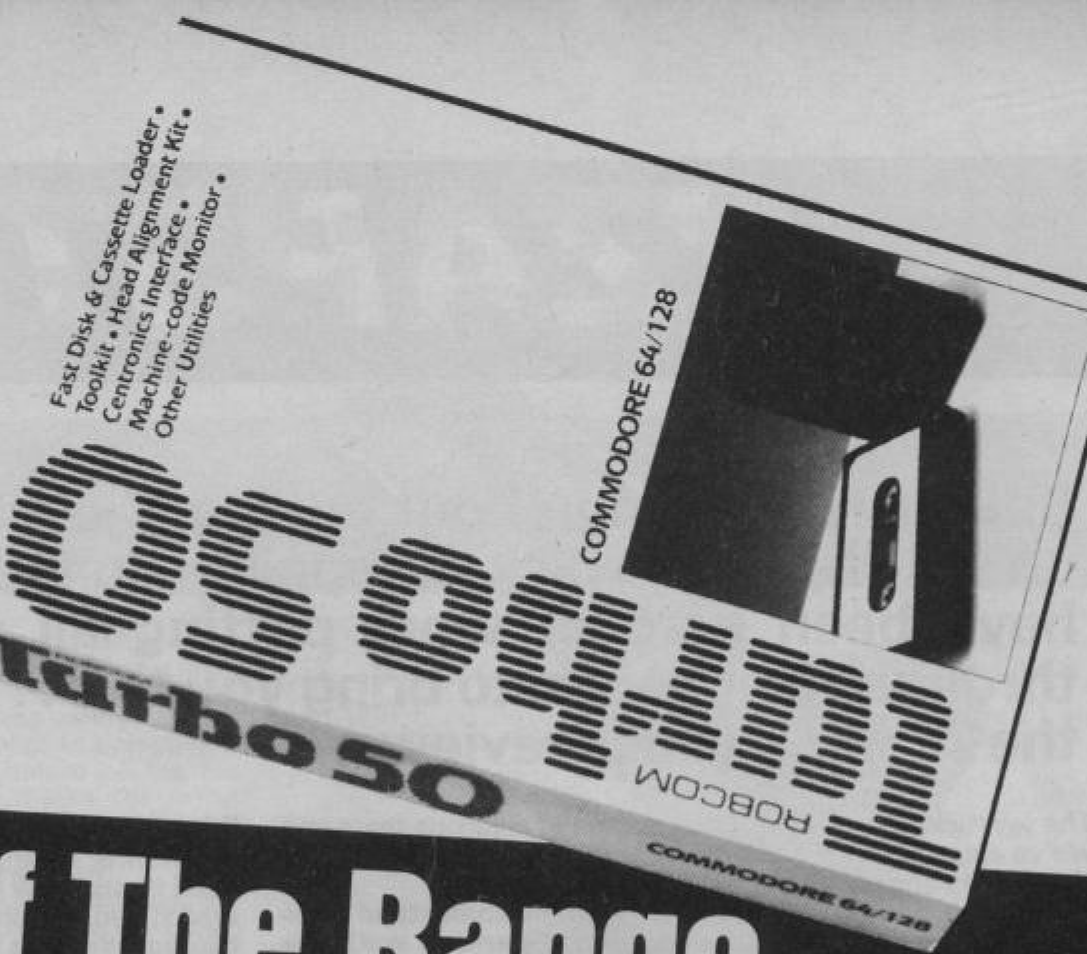
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ZZAP! COMP



10 Top Of The Range ROBCOM cartridges up for grabs!!!

A glance at Zzap No7 will confirm that our very own Tea-Making Techno Kid, Gary Liddon, reviewed the ROBCOM DISK TURBO CARTRIDGE by none other than **ROBCOM**. Now, one month on, that same company have offered to supply us with TEN of the little black boxes to give away as competition prizes.

So, we present a LIDDON PRODUCTIONS & COMPETITION MINION SPECIAL. Here's your chance to get your 1541 drive running as fast as Franco Frey's car. First ten correct entries out of the cardboard box (no expense spared on this one) will win the goodies. Of course, we couldn't just give you a wordsquare or spot the difference for something like this, good lord no. So in an attempt to do something really original and dull, we've devised a few devious technical questions for you to answer.

After all, Gary has to have some opportunity to prove he can do more complex things than losing cassette inlays and being able to avoid real work with magnificent ease. He's not been well recently and has reached the inevitable conclusion that he doesn't really exist. So apart from getting your hands on Robcom's nifty little device (and a must for tool pushers and gadget freaks), you're also going to be able to prove Liddon wrong.

How can anybody turn down such an opportunity? No, that isn't part of the competition. This bit is though:

ROBCOMPETITION

1. What hex string represents mnemonics **LDA $FF ?**
2. What processor is the 64's 6510 a version of?
3. Name the 6510's internal registers.
4. Why wouldn't this assembly listing work on the 64?

```
LOOP LD B,20
     LD A,65
     LD HL,$400
LOOP LD (HL),A
     INC HL
     DJNZ LOOP
     RET
```

See, anyone could answer that lot before breakfast! All entries should be sent to the hallowed Wheaty Flake box at:

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ZZAP! 64 MAGAZINE,
PO BOX 10, LUDLOW,
SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB.

Entries on a postcard (or back of a sealed envelope) please and make sure your own name, address and telephone number (if you have one) are included. Entries should arrive no later than December 16, oh and please remember to put the words ZZAP! MAGAZINE in the address to help our poor post sorting people. Good Luck...

ZZAPSTICK! —

Seriously thinking about buying a joystick and can't decide on which stick to pick? Despair no longer for the ZZAP! team have been hard at work putting all manner of joysticks through their paces, to bring you this . . . the third batch of the ZZAP! joystick reviews.

The joysticks are put through a series of rigorous tests and we've come up with a marks scheme to refect the results of these tests and our opinions in general.

Do the suckers suck? How well does the shaft stand up to pressure? Does the stick feel good and perform well? We answer all these questions and more in our search for ultimate joystick fulfillment.

All joysticks have been tested on four different types of game — *Thing on a Spring, Way of the Exploding Fist, Dropzone* and *Decathlon*. These games were chosen because we thought they brought out the necessary requirements of a joystick. *Thing on a Spring* was used to see how responsive/sensitive a joystick is fr such things as pixel perfect jumps. *Way of the Exploding Fit* needs something with easy to obtain diagonals and fast responses, while *Dropzone* requires all round quick response on both movement and firing. Once the stick had been tested under 'simple' game conditions, *Decathlon*, the renowned joystick destroyer, was used to see how they stood up to severe pressure. If a stick was still in one piece after this heavy pounding, it was taken through the first three games again to see just how well it had worn in.

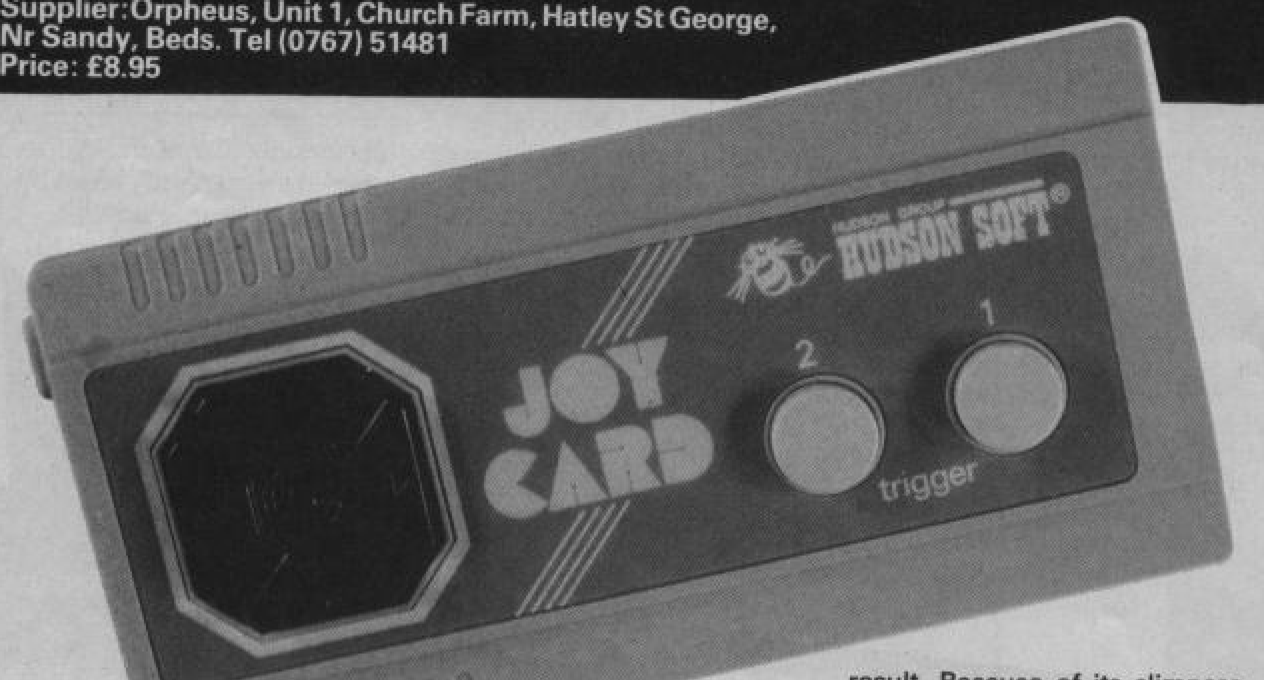
Manufacturers, Distributors and suchlike, gather ye round and harken to our words . . .

If you have a joystick, trackball etc that you feel should be put to the ZZAP! test, then hesitate for not a second longer. What are you waiting for? Take the plunge and send us your wares for placing under our rigorous and scrutineering eye...

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JOY CARD

Supplier: Orpheus, Unit 1, Church Farm, Hatley St George, Nr Sandy, Beds. Tel (0767) 51481
Price: £8.95



The *Joycard* is very unusual in its design being very flat, more like a credit card calculator and is about the same size. The controller and fire buttons are set into the card, and although small are very responsive since button to contact distance is minute. The direction controller is placed upon a centrally placed pivot, rather like a mushroom. To move in any direction just press the controller in that direction.

There are two fire buttons which, although not springy, are responsive and good for rapid fire.

We decided to put it through a bout of *Decathlon* to see whether it really worked as a joystick and were quite surprised at the result. Because of its slimness and flat buttons the controller can be used like the arcade *Track and Field* buttons.

It fared well in the *Thing* test too. Because the card is responsive some pretty deft moves can be done with ease. It was on *Dropzone* where it failed. Moving the jetman around became a real pain because of the size of the controller and fingers soon started to tangle up.

The final test was another come down. *Fist* needs diagonals, which on this are difficult to get when the situation demands them. It worked well on the four points of the compass and was responsive to a fire button/direction move, but didn't really work at all with diagonal/fire.

The card is very durable and showed no sign of damage after being through the tests twice — the case is very strong and even if stepped on (the 'Jeremy 'Amtix Editor' Spencer Test') showed absolutely zero wear and tear.

It's a strange controller and takes a bit of getting used to but is still very good.

Responsiveness: 97%
Very responsive — reaction as soon as the buttons are pressed.
Responsiveness: Button 95%
Not springy, but quick reacting.
Ergonomics 67%
Nice on the table, but dodgy in the hand.
Durability 97%
Seemed to be virtually indestructible.
Value for Money 81%
Less than the average joystick.
Overall 78%
And the best flat controller yet.

Joystick Review



QUICKSHOT I

Supplier: Spectravideo Ltd, 165 Garth Rd, Morden, Surrey SM4 4LH. Tel (01) 330 0101
Price: £7.95

The *Quickshots I* and *II* are amongst the most popular joysticks for the Commodore 64, maybe because of their wide availability or perhaps because they both offer quite a number of features for a reasonably cheap price.

The *Quickshot I* is of the ergonomic 'long grip' genre, and has two fire buttons and four suckers for stability whilst playing. When you actually grasp the handle it's a bit like holding a funny banana with no real grip since it tapers and has a smooth stem. At the top sits one of the fire buttons, the other one is situated on the base.

These fire buttons aren't very responsive and give a 'click' when pressed, turning rapid fire into a chore and therefore making games like *Dropzone* difficult. Because of its long stem the joystick requires some wrenching to get it swiftly from one position to the other making it again tricky for intricate *Dropzone* manoeuvres.

Exploding Fist was the second test and it again didn't fare too well. Some rather dubious creaking noises were heard when the joystick was swiftly rammed into a diagonal to complete a move. The nature of the fire button also makes the going rather rough — it is very difficult to accomplish a diagonal/fire button move at speed.

During the *Decathlon* test the joystick creaked and groaned alarmingly and we feared that it could well break. By the end of the test the stem was very loose and we felt that a few more poundings like that and it could well break up.

We weren't too impressed with its performance with *Thing on a Spring* — 'pixel shuffles' were exceedingly difficult to execute, especially since the stem was now loose and flaccid.

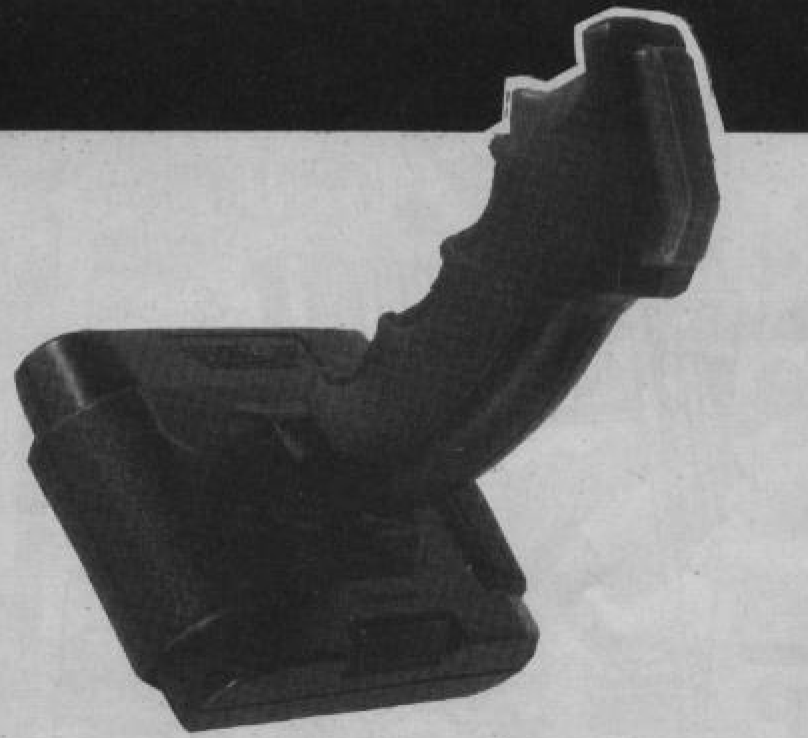
When taken through the tests for the second time our doubts about its durability were proved right. The stick really started to flop about and became highly unresponsive and a pain to use.

The *Quickshot I* may be cheap, but when compared with the *Atari* its dubious durability and unresponsiveness make it seem far inferior.

Responsiveness: 67%
Very disappointing and diagonals are very difficult to accomplish.
Responsiveness: Button 58%
'Clicky' fire button needs a hard press to gain a result.
Ergonomics 81%
Nicely shaped handle, but could well become slippery when your hands sweat.
Durability 42%
Alarming creaks when the going gets tough.
Value for Money 73%
Cheap, but definitely not underpriced.
Overall 53%
If you're low on dough it's this or an *Atari*...

QUICKSHOT II

Supplier: Spectravideo Ltd
Price: £11.95



The *Quickshot II* has taken its design from the *Quickshot I* and improved upon it. It incorporates a better grip with improved fire buttons and an autofire facility. It also has suckers on the bottom to keep the stick stable during play.

The stem is very comfortable to hold and has two fire buttons at the top forming a trigger (for the index finger) and a top button which works well with the thumb.

When putting it through the games test the same problems were encountered with those whilst using the *Quickshot I*, although it is fair to say that the *Quickshot II* does contain better contacts than those in its predecessor and therefore has a quicker response time.

The *Thing on a Spring* test proved quite successful, although swift left/right jumps were difficult to achieve because of the length of the stem.

Trouble was encountered with *Fist* since quick diagonals were difficult to accomplish. The stick worked pretty well on the N/S/E/W directions and performed well in conjunction with the fire button.

The *Dropzone* test gave the autofire a chance to show us its paces, but unfortunately left us unimpressed. The autofire doesn't shoot a steady stream of bullets but shoots in 'pulses' - if you're happily winging towards a planter and the pulse stops trouble is encountered. The stick proved to be quite a success though, even if a lot of waggling was needed to move the jetman about quickly.

Again the *Decathlon* test proved a bit of a come down. The creaks and groans as the stick was whanged from side to side were really bad, and again the familiar looseness was in evidence after the test.

Taking the stick through the tests the second time around had very similar results to the *Quickshot I* — the stick was very loose by now and flopped to one side if left alone. The durability of both sticks is generally poor — JR bought one a long time ago and says it lasted him three weeks. If you have got delicate hands the *Quickshot II* is a reasonable buy, but if you play rough then you could well end up with a heap of twisted plastic.

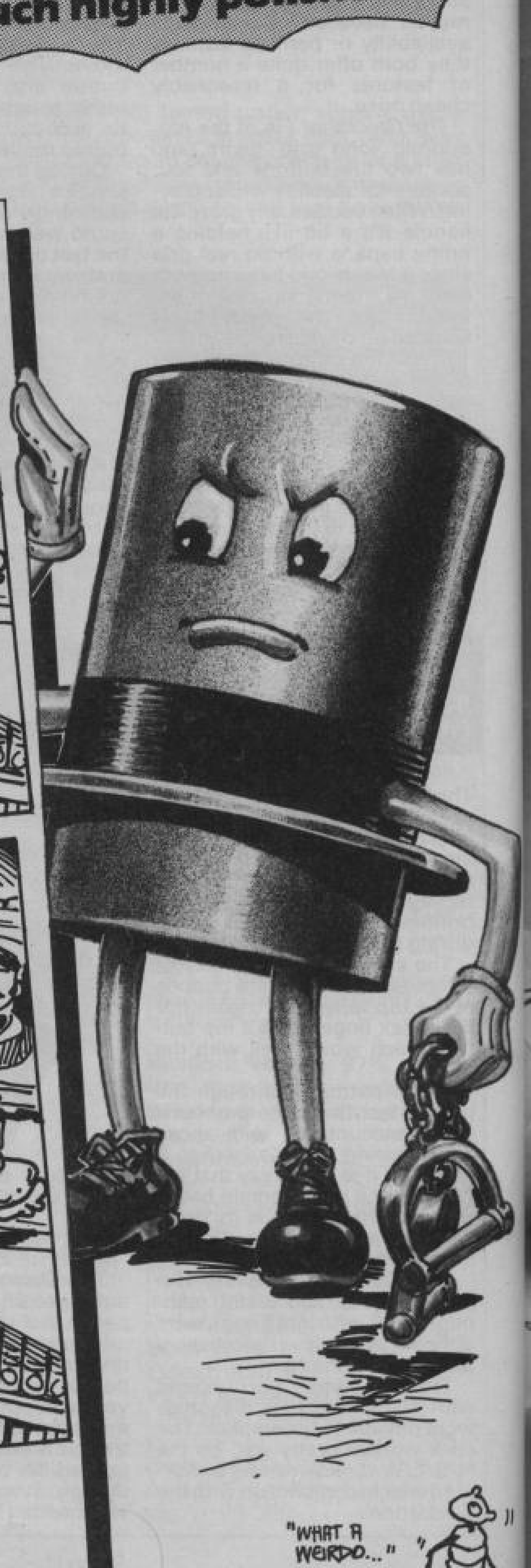
Responsiveness: 73%
Long stem **4** slow(ish) response.
Responsiveness: Button 83%
Rather 'clicky' but comfortable and effective to use. Top fire button rather redundant.
Ergonomics 88%
Nice to handle with a good grip and well positioned fire buttons.
Durability 59%
Rather plasticky and doesn't stand up to pressure.
Value for Money 67%
Cheap(ish) for a stick...
Overall 62%
But nothing sooper-doops.



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Here's a chance to find out what it's like to be one of the 'Boys in Blue', and to help you get a head start in your career, we've got 50 copies of TOPPER THE COPPER to give to the lucky winners of this taxing competition. Being a copper means having a good eye for detail, and being able spot discrepancies in peoples' stories, so in a flash of brilliant competition minionesque inspiration, it struck me that a Spot the Difference was the obvious solution to a tricky problem. But because one or two ZZAP! readers (unappreciative of the difficulties in my life) think they're pitifully simple, there's also a question to get right — HAH!

Ring the 10 differences on picture B, answer the question correctly and wing your entry off to TOPPER COMP, ZZAP! MAGAZINE, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB to arrive by 16th December latest. The first 50 correct entries drawn from the bag each receive a copy of TOPPER THE COPPER.





ZZAP! COMP

Question: We also call a COPPER a BOBBY, while Americans just call them COPS. Why we don't therefore call them BOBS, I don't know, but how many old COPPERS went into an old BOB? ☐

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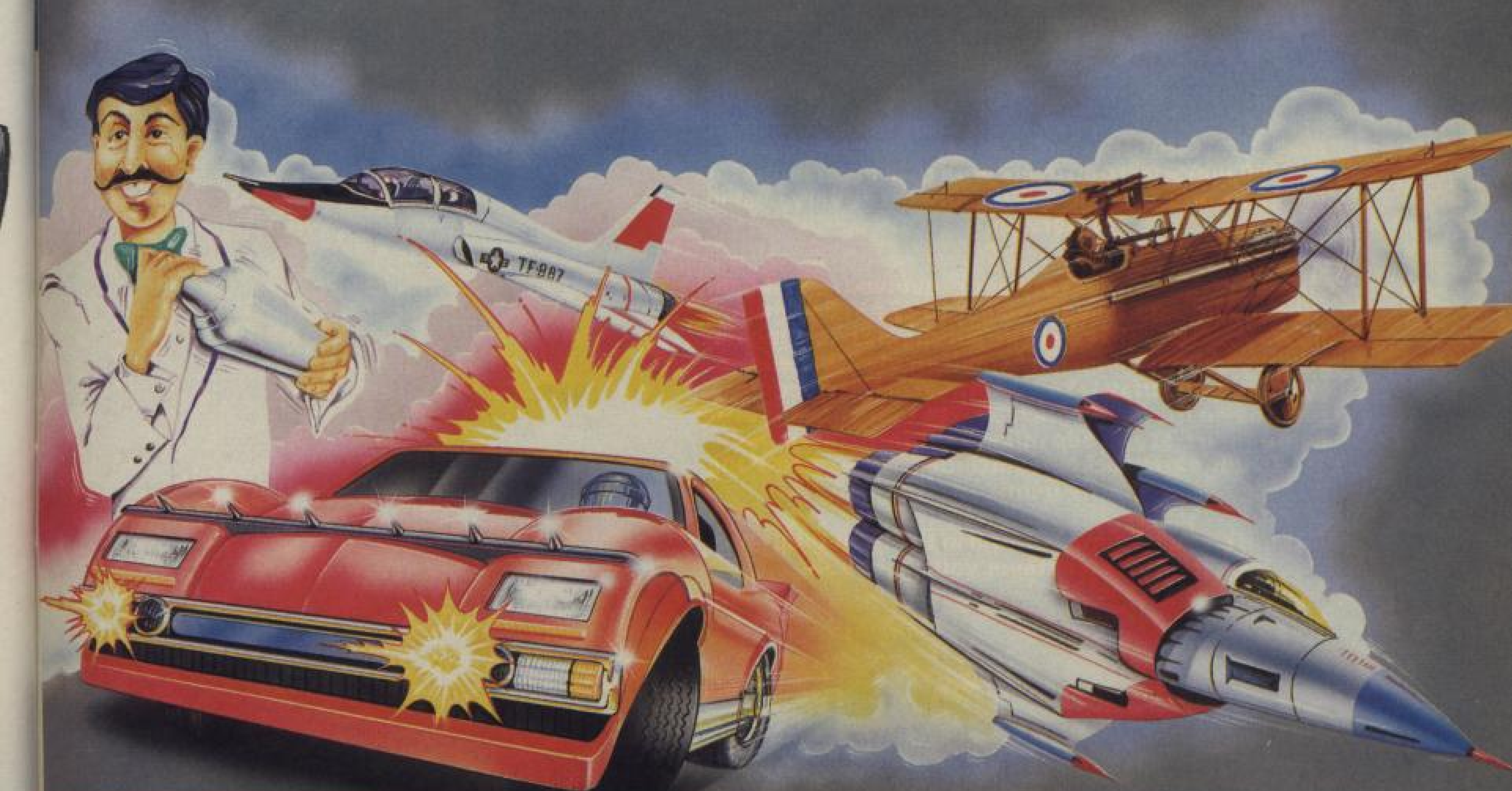
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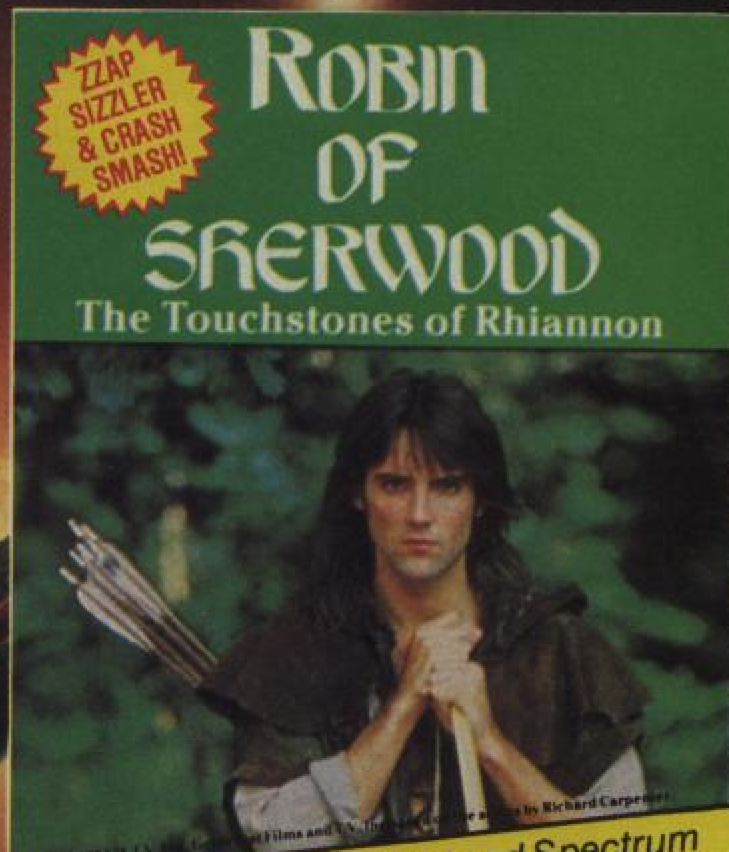
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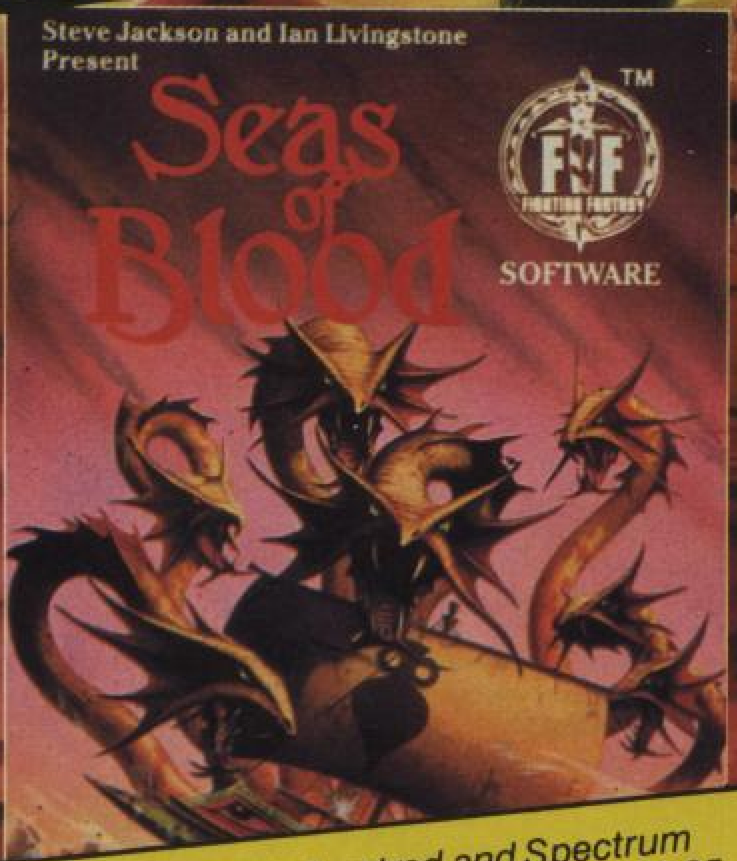
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A complete monthly guide by the infamous White Wizard for all 64 owners who prefer games involving typed commands rather than wiggled joysticks.

ZZAP! adventure



Hold it right there, fellow Wizards! This month's column heralds the beginning of a whole new age of adventuring. The White Wizard's wand is positively gleaming with excitement as he detects the long-awaited signs of an adventure software REVOLUTION! Can it be true? Has the Bearded One knocked back one glass of Vole's Blood too many? Read on, and see what the Might Mage is getting so worked up about . . .

I'll break my staff if there isn't something very odd happening in Adventure-world right now. A few month's ago the White Wizard decided he was fed up with British software houses churning out the same old rubbish time after time. With one or two notable exceptions (Level 9's *Red Moon*, for example) there have been very few good adventure releases recently. Can it REALLY be over two years since Melbourne House introduced interactive characters in the *Hobbit*? How many adventures have you seen recently that really exploit the potential of having individual non-player controlled entities like Gandalf and Thorin?

Just to give you an example of what ol' Whitey is on about — take a look at *Robin of Sherwood* from Adventure International. This is a very popular game and stands out in terms of sales over most recent adventures, but let's face it, what has it got to offer apart from pretty pictures? There aren't that many locations — certainly nothing like the 200-plus you get in a Level 9 game, and although it accepts complex inputs, you can't do anything clever like talk to other characters and get meaningful responses, or enter complex multiple commands, like 'Take everything except the Troll's handbag and go west'.

You may wonder what I'm going on about, but the point is that from the programming point of view, adventure software has hardly developed at all in the last two years. The only real change has been the addition of graphics, and this is simply a marketing exercise to cover up the deficiencies of the programs — limited input routines and no application whatsoever of so-called 'artificial intelligence' theory to the programming of the characters in the games.

Meanwhile, across the Atlantic, Infocom continue to churn out excellently designed games with complex character interaction and huge sales. Over here, half the adventure companies have gone bust — where's Dream Software, or Phipps Associates — and when did you last see a program from Richard Shepherd of *Urban Upstart* fame? Virgin, Alligata, Duckworth . . . companies like these are still around, but they're all swearing that they won't touch adventures with a barge-pole from now on. Frankly, the White Wizard reckons that if they can't be bothered to put their back into their programs then that decision is best for all concerned. Now, however, it looks as if things are really beginning to change. Some British software companies have suddenly woken up to the fact that people will buy adventures if they're carefully programmed, include graphics but aren't dominated by them, and have imaginative themes . . . And the staggering thing is that this month alone has seen the release of FOUR such games — each excellent in its own way. And what's more, one of these is from a new adventure house, while other companies — Level 9 in particular — have suddenly released details of adventure creation systems that will enable them to clobber Infocom at their own game!

We'll be covering these systems and the people who created them over the next few issues as well as sampling some of the new breed of British 'super-adventures' as they appear. Meanwhile, get stuck into this month's offerings!



THE MAGICIAN'S BALL

Global Software, £7.95 cass

This is a new game from a new company — Global Software, who have a firm commitment to the adventure market. You can check out the details of their next release in the news section, but first you should definitely find the time and the cash to get acquainted with the *Magician's Ball*.

The plot of this game isn't startlingly original, but it's gripping enough — a young girl has been turned to stone by an evil Wizard (we're not all white, you know) and you must destroy the baddy and reverse the spell. Standard stuff, but this game has quite a few features not normally found on adventures that really makes it stand out as a first release.

First, it's got interactive characters. You can talk to them, and in fact instruct them to do anything that you can get the main character, Caro, to do. They may not obey you, of course, but that's half the fun! Alternatively you may find that you can't speak their language, but in some cases this problem can be overcome through the correct use of various objects.

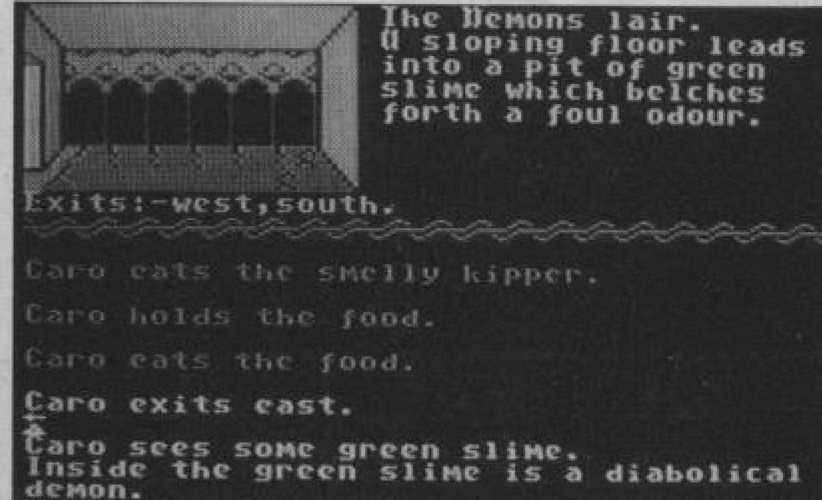
The characters in the *Magician's Ball* are truly independent — they will move about of their own accord, get and use objects, and attack or help the player. The only thing they don't do is talk, but this omission doesn't detract much from the fun of the game. There is one other major character called Azul and, as in the *Hobbit* and *Valhalla*, you won't be able to complete the game without interacting with him very carefully.

However, the real interest here is that you can actually take control of Azul and 'use' him as the main character — so if by any chance Caro is killed you don't necessarily have to end the game. Typing 'Azul' automatically transfers control to this character, in a similar way that pressing certain keys in *Lords of Midnight* enables you to 'see' through the eyes of other Lords. This technique has enormous potential in future games — and the White Wizard notes that Melbourne House are planning to introduce it in *Lord of the Rings*.

The parser in *The Magician's Ball* is also excellent. A rather inferior magazine wrote a preview of the game, claiming that when they tried to enter 'Take envelope' (from one of the locations, where you can see a 'small envelope'), he was told 'I don't understand 'Envelope'. Must have been a bug in his spelling or his version of the game, because mine understood it perfectly, and also understood things like 'Look east' (useful for looking into adjacent locations) — though there were some rather odd bugs in the 'Throw' routines. Typing 'Throw demon at Kipper' gets you the response 'Caro throws the smell kipper to the diabolical demon'. A little off, perhaps, but nothing too horrendously wrong there.

Other points about the game include excellent screen design — the graphics are neat, tidy, and don't dominate the display as they do in *Ulysses* (see later) for example. This is important because the smaller the graphics the more care can be taken over them. The one's in *Magician's Ball* incorporate animation and intricate design very effectively.

Other nice points about the display include use of colour when printing text. Your inputs are echoed in yellow and the most recent response is also printed in yellow, but old responses turn to green as they scroll up the page, allowing you to concentrate on the up-to-date info but keeping a record of previous responses onscreen should you need them.



Finally, there's the music. This is a Commodorised version of *Tubular Bells* by Mike Oldfield. The conversion has been done very well, and you get different sequences in different locations. You can always turn the volume down if you can't stand Mike Oldfield, but I found it gave the game as a whole a pleasantly enhanced atmosphere.

So there you go — a new game from a new company that is well worth adding to your collection. My only reservation is that there aren't that many locations — around about fifty, I should say, at the most. But what with diabolical demons, wandering trees, and a small female dragon there's plenty to keep you occupied!

Atmosphere 72%
Interaction 70%
Lasting Interest 76%
Value For Money 79%
Overall 75%

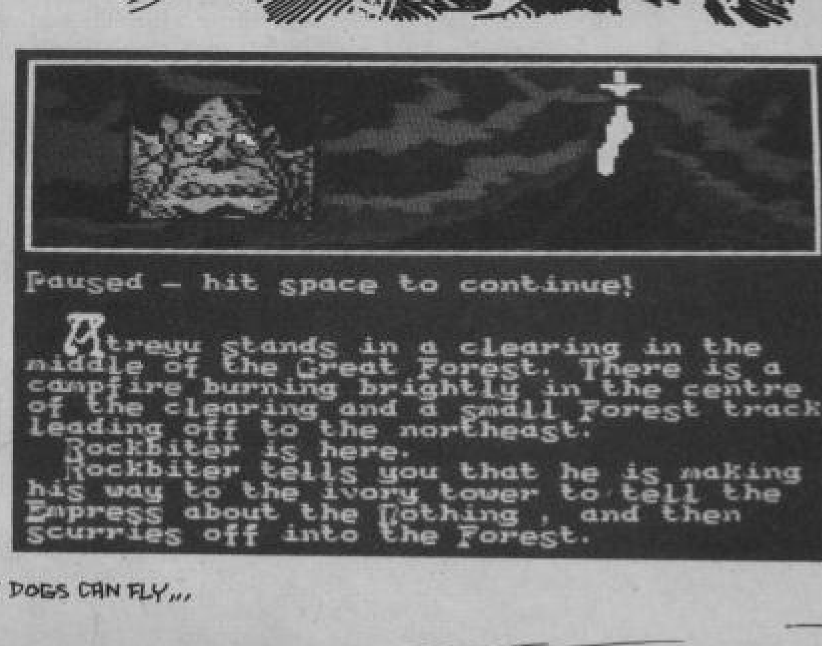
THE NEVER ENDING STORY

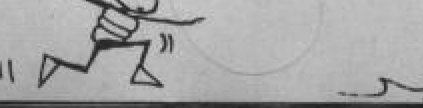
Ocean, £9.95 cass



This 100K blockbuster is based on the film of the same name and loads in three parts from cassette. It's an excellent example of the new breed of graphics adventures, where someone's really taken care over the design of the pictures so that they properly complement the game and aren't just there for decoration.

The plot, just in case you're among the millions who missed this cinematic epic, concerns a planet called Fantasia which is under 'attack' from an all-consuming 'Nothing'. Just what this Nothing is, isn't very clear, although it's obviously something to be reckoned with. The hero of the game is a boy called Atreyu,





who alone can find the saviour so desperately needed. Although the White Wizard didn't manage to complete the game before sitting down to review this masterpiece, he is willing to hazard a guess that the saviour in question is none other than yours truly, but only time and playing the game will tell!

The screen display is really quite impressive. At the top you have a narrow graphics window with an attractive landscape background that is periodically overlaid with small cameo portraits of objects you are carrying, people you meet, or locations you visit. The pictures are very pleasant, and when combined with a well-designed character-set, give the program's display a very professional appearance. If only other companies spent as much time over the appearance of their games — many a good program has been seriously marred by poor screen design. There is a price to pay for all this glitter, however, and that's a poor parser. The program only understands about 40 words, and of these most are direction commands and the usual GET/DROP/LOOK variants. One important omission is of an 'Examine' command — particularly sorely missed since on many occasions you will be confronted with an object, or even an individual, about whom you know very little. The cassette cover blurb says, for example, of your potential companions that you will have to judge for yourself whether or not they will help or hinder you in your quest — but this isn't easy when you can't look at them! Is Artax, for example, a horse, a bird, or another human being? Such questions have to be answered by referring to the program notes — a practice that the White Wizard frowns on since program notes have a habit of disappearing with the passage of time.

Time appears to play a part in the game — if you sit back and do nothing, the program prompts with 'You wait . . . ' Hobbit-style, but the other characters don't seem to take advantage of this and remain static, which is a pity. In fact the characters, although obviously significant, don't seem very interactive — which is just as well because there isn't enough of a vocab to communicate with them anyway.

Whatever the shortcomings of the parser, however, the Wiz reckons this is a very attractive program. There's a considerable atmosphere to the game, which is supported (and not detracted from) by the graphics. I think the game would be particularly welcomed by younger players, but don't let that put you off if you're of more advanced years and have a chance of loading it up.

Atmosphere 72%
Interaction 47%
Lasting Interest 71%
Value For Money 62%
Overall 65%

ULYSSES

US Gold, £14.95 disk only

Talking of advanced years, the White Wizard made a careful study of Latin and Greek in his youth — he had to, since that was all people spoke in those days. For this reason, he knew what his task was in *Ulysses* before he's even loaded up the game. Grab a few sailor friends, jump onto a ship, and sail off to retrieve the Golden Fleece before returning with it to the King, who will reward you handsomely. Sounds great, but alas — this is one of those games that the Wiz reckons we could do without.



First, it's disk-only, and all the extra space is used to provide full-screen graphics — at the expense of the text, which is pretty skimpy and just squeezes in at the bottom of the display. Also, I'm afraid, at the expense of the vocabulary, which is virtually non-existent. Trying to type 'Examine fence', on finding a location with a fence specifically mentioned, is a waste of time — don't expect the program to understand 'Fence', it doesn't even understand 'examine'. In fact, it doesn't really understand much at all, so most of the challenge of the game is finding and using your possessions in the right place and in the right way.

So, I hear you cry, with all that space given over to graphics, it must be a very PRETTY game — pretty grim, more like. The graphics are about Hobbit-standard, and since that particular standard was established two years ago I think we're entitled to see a small improvement by now. The only small point worth noting is that objects are shown in the display and disappear when you take them. Big deal — I'd rather be able to examine them and use them properly rather than see them flip in and out of the picture.

As it is, the original story of Ulysses is so superb that some of its atmosphere rubs off on this game. However, this modicum of enjoyment is spoilt by having to endure endless disk accesses as the patchy graphics and skimpy text are located and flashed (with much glitching) onto the screen. Nor is there any sound worth mentioning — except a little 'Ping' when the text threatens to spill off the bottom of the screen and you have to press shift to see what comes next. Frankly, I felt more inclined to press the reset button.

Perhaps I shouldn't be TOO rude about this game, but really I think we can justifiably expect more for our money these days, especially where disc games are concerned. Too much time here has been spent on crummy graphics and too little on game design, I fear.

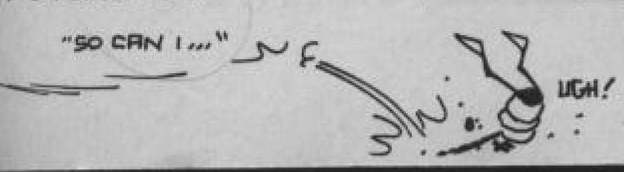
Atmosphere 60%
Interaction 42%
Lasting Interest 60%
Value For Money 38%
Overall 45%

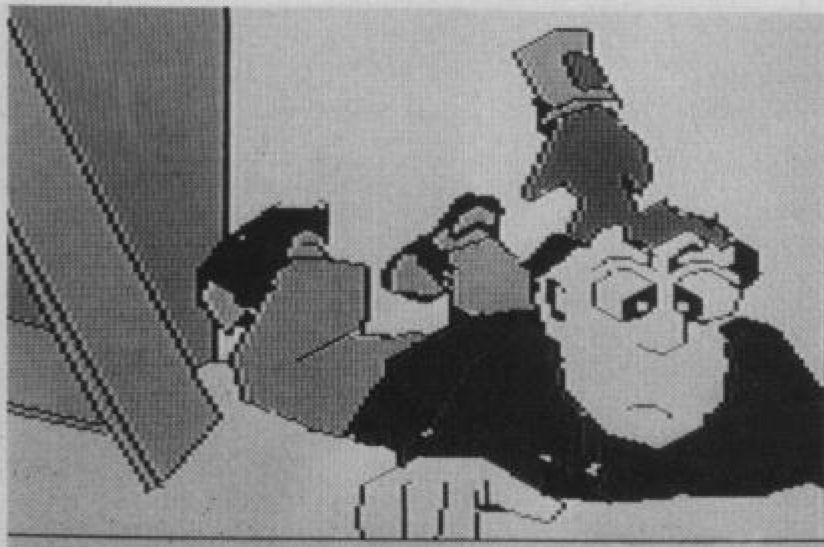
TERRORMOLINOS

Melbourne House, £7.95 cass



The poor design of *Ulysses* becomes even more apparent when you load up a game like *Terrormolinos*, brought to you via Melbourne House from the team who wrote *Hampstead*. These jokey lads have now come up with the ultimate in package holidays and a program that, by virtue of its screen display and rather slow operation, betrays Quill origins. As we all know the Quill isn't exactly renowned for producing complex games with huge vocabularies and multi-word input, but *Terrormolinos* is the perfect example of a game





where limited facilities have been totally overcome by excellent design.

In this game you can take photos, join in bull fights, hire taxis and go to the airport, speak Spanish (with a little help from the cassette cover), and shepherd your wife Beryl and two kids Doreen and Ken from beach to bar — all with two word inputs. That's quite an achievement in the Wiz's opinion, and only goes to show that complex inputs and huge vocabularies aren't absolutely necessary for a great game.

The idea behind *Terrormolinos* is that you should not only go to Spain, but that you (and your family) should return in one piece. This is not, dear friends, very easy. Not only must you go there — you must PROVE you've gone there! And the only way to do that is to snap off some pretty piccies of . . . well, whatever you think will go down well on film. Believe me, there's no shortage of photogenic situations, but you've only got 12 exposures and must return with ten good pics, so any more than two boobs will lose you the game. I reckon even David Bailey would find this almost impossible and the only thing I took a picture of was so unbearably humiliating that I refuse to discuss it further.

If the pics are tricky — try keeping track of your family! If Our Ken isn't dawdling behind somewhere, then Beryl's fainting, or Little Doreen is wandering off on her ownsome. Despite the fact that you can't really interact with these characters (apart from CALLING them, which you have to do constantly to keep them together) they really come to life. The moment little Doreen comes running when you call her is enough to make you feel downright proud and parental — until you discover that you've missed the plane, or the taxi, or your footing on the ladder and ooops! That WAS a naughty word daddy said, wasn't it?

In fact the program doesn't understand much in the way of naughty words, but whatever the limitations of the vocabulary, or the occasional slowness of the responses, this is a game well worth looking out for. You can sit back and load up a holiday in your bedroom — the White Wizard reckons you'll need one when you've finished it.

Atmosphere 70%
Interaction 58%
Lasting Interest 68%
Value For Money 75%
Overall 68%

THE SECRET DIARY OF ADRIAN MOLE

Mosaic/Level 9, £9.95 cass, £12.95 disk



Finally, here's another excellently designed game that the White Wizard considers to be extremely significant. Level 9 have teamed up once again with Mosaic to bring you the now-not-very-secret adventures of young Mole, a spotty teenager with a crush on a girl called Pandora and a lot of very personal problems, most of which can be seen on his chin.

The idea of having a program that really just tells a story by scrolling text up the screen and occasionally asking the player to choose a course of action that may alter the plot is not new. It all started with the Fighting Fantasy books and was programmed on the Spectrum by Five Ways Software a year or so ago. However, it has never really caught on because of the problems of fitting enough text into a cassette-based system to make the whole exercise worthwhile.

Level 9, however, have achieved the notable feat of cramming no less than 200K of text into four separate data blocks, which altogether adds up to around 35,000 words if the Wiz's Wordstar files are anything to go by. Each block comprises further extracts from the diary of Mole, and you can't move on to the next episode until you've finished the earlier phases.



As you play, pretty graphics appear at the top of the screen, and what seems like endless text scrolls up the screen below. Occasionally (and more frequently as the game progresses) it halts and asks you to choose between one of three alternatives. These are usually along the lines of 'What shall I do: (1) Go to the party (2) Stay at home (3) Invite Pandora to the party' and the plot then unfolds, according to which selection you made.

There are two obvious questions here. First, does the plot really change all that much, and second, if you've already read all the Mole books (millions have), is there going to be anything here to hold your interest that you don't know already?

Well, there's no doubt that the plot does change quite a bit as you proceed to make your various choices, but perhaps not quite as much as one would like. The Wiz supposes that this is because some things are really fundamental to the plot — like meeting Bert Baxter, the OAP — and if you were to miss these out altogether then real problems might arise with the script. As it is, if you decide (as I did) not to visit Bert Baxter, the program cleverly goes along with you for a while until it finds an excuse to get you round to his house. It's done very well, but it does have the effect of repeatedly introducing certain events each time you play the game — but then that happens with all adventures, so one can hardly complain.

What's really remarkable about this program though, is that 50% of the material is completely original and different from the existing Mole stories. The White Wizard simply assumed that Mosaic had drafted in authoress Sue Townsend to dream up some more dilemmas for her young hero, but no! All the additions were made by Pete Austin of Level 9. Ye gods! The man's a genius! He's more like Sue Townsend than Sue Townsend herself — at least as far as the script's concerned. With only one or two minor exceptions, there wasn't a paragraph that couldn't have come from the pen of Ms Townsend — the text is hilarious, witty, and beautifully written, and — most important of all — it's full of surprises, even if you know the books backwards.

As i've already said, I reckon this is an important program. Now we've seen one series of books successfully implemented on a micro using this technique, it's the Wiz's firm expectation that there will be more to follow. Stand by for *Live and Let Die* — and in the meantime, get a copy of *Adrian Mole*!

Atmosphere 75%
Interaction N/A
Lasting Interest 75%
Value For Money 70%
Overall 75%



News . . . News . . . News . . .

It's all happening this month, folks. The White Wizard has had his ear nailed to the ground the last few weeks, and has much to report. What's certain, however, is that this Christmas is going to be a real spell-binder for adventurers, so sharpen your swords and see what ol' Whitey, Santa, and the following software companies have in store for you . . .

● *Lord of the Rings* is nearly ready! Yessir, after three centuries of promises and eager anticipation, **Melbourne House** are on the verge of launching this long-awaited successor to the *Hobbit* — it may even be in the shops as you read this. Meanwhile, the White Wizard can reveal that the game will have as many as six interactive characters (though MH are toying with the idea of reducing this to four), a vastly increased vocabulary, and the ability to change roles (rather like the *Magician's Ball* in this issue). That means that different players can each take on a character — or that you can carry on playing even if Frodo (the main character) is in difficulties.

Lord of the Rings isn't going to be cheap at £15.95, however, but you do get a copy of the *Fellowship of the Ring* as well as a 32 page instruction booklet. The game is pretty bulky, so it comes on two cassettes. Disk owners will be glad to know that a disk version will appear for £19.95 — hopefully at the same time as the cassette version. I say hopefully, since Melbourne House don't offer an upgrade service, so if you buy the cassette version first and then decide you want it on disc, you'll have to pay the full price all over again.

● **Global Software**, who brought us *The Magician's Ball* and who WW reckons are going to be one of the hottest properties on the adventure scene if they can keep it up, are bringing you *Old Scores*. Programmed by **Pete Green**, this little number features some very advanced parsing techniques, so you can do things like 'Kill everything except the balrog', as well as address characters directly and luxuriate in lengthy location descriptions.

The plot features derring-do and underworld violence as you hunt down some stolen musical scores. Sounds hot, so it should keep you warm through the chilly winter evenings.

● **Audiogenic** have taken over the manufacturing and production of *The Secret of St Brides* from St Brides School in Ireland. Wizards should keep a sharp eye open for the next St Brides game, *The Snow Queen*, which the Wondrous One will be reviewing next month. The prog sounds very different to *St Brides*, being a careful adaptation of Anderson's fairy story, together with a very independent heroine. So independent, apparently, that if your commands aren't acceptable to her, she'll stalk off in a huff and the game will end!

● **Adventure International** are at it hammer and tongs. Most interesting of all is *Seas of Blood* — an epic graphics and text adventure based on the Fighting Fantasy series of 'interactive novels' by **Ian Livingstone** and **Steve Jackson**. AI are claiming that this blockbuster will give you 200 plus locations with graphics and combat routines for £9.95.

Meanwhile, AI are also hard at work on *Questprobe III*, the next release for all you True Believin' Scott Adams fans out there. This program MUST be hot — it stars the Human Torch! And The Thing also makes an appearance. Hmmm . . . that's only two of the Fantastic Four. Where are the others? Answer . . . 'Coming soon. . . .'

And if all that's not enough, Adventure International are also working on a follow-up to *Robin of Sherwood*. This very popular game certainly deserves a sequel, but the White Wizard hopes that the programmers aren't quite as lazy this time — the last game ignored half your inputs.

● **Level 9** are of the verge of releasing *The Worm in Paradise*. It's their first release to use a newly developed adventure system that the White Wizard went to Weston-Super-Mare recently to get the low-down on. The benefits are bigger vocabularies (1000 plus words), more text due to cleverer compression, ultra-complex input on a par with Infocom's, so you 'exclude' certain sets of objects in generalised commands — for example, 'Examine everything except the Infocom disc', and simultaneous drawing of pictures and entering of text (as in *Adrian Mole*).

The Worm will set you back £9.95 and is rather more political than previous Level 9 games — the whole state in 'Paradise' has been privatised and things are going from bad to worse. Can you find the solution to man's problems? If you can, don't bother to play this game, but send your solution on a postcard to the White Wizard — I promise I'll go 50-50 on all the proceeds!

● **Finally, good news from Firebird** — they're launching a new label (what, ANOTHER label?? They've already got three) called the Hot Range, and one of the launch titles is going to be *Runestone*. In case you haven't heard of this little number, it was originally written by Games Workshop (who produced a couple of excellent games including *Tower of Despair*) but was never released. Keep your eyes skinned for this one — the White Wizard isn't sure of the price yet, but the idea of a Games Workshop masterpiece at Firebird prices is very attractive.

Wizard Tips . . .

Can't you hear that awful wailing sound? No, it's not Des O'Connor in the distance, it's the lamentations of thousands of lost souls, wandering in the endless labyrinths of Adventureland — and only YOU can help them get out! Remember, adventuring is all about sharing your experiences with others, and by doing so you can keep in contact with people around the world. Send your

THE WORM IN PARADISE

Everybody's micro needs magic

£9.95 on AMSTRAD, ATARI, BBC, CBM, MSX, SPECTRUM etc.

Available from Level 9 Computing, PO Box 39, Weston-super-Mare, Avon BS24 9UR

helpful hints in to the Wiz today for publication in this column, or else join the band of brave souls offering help in the Help Offered column. Don't forget — one day it could be YOU who's stuck in a game, so throw out a lifeline to someone now and send in a tip on your favourite (or even your least favourite) game to: THE WHITE WIZARD'S DUNGEON, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB.

Mordon's Quest
- Haven't the foggiest where to go next? Let there be light . . .
- Remember Sir Walter Raleigh? He threw down his cloak so the Queen wouldn't get her feet muddy — or was it sandy?

Gremlins
- If you missed the film, make sure you see it in the game!

Sorceror of Claymorgue Castle
- Dragons are always worth a second look!

Sherlock
- Basil sleeps at midnight

Aztec Tomb
- Don't go passage until you've lit torch!
- Don't hang on to that diamond — use it to open a passage

Empire of Karn
- Shantra needs something before you can take off
- If you can't leave on your feet, leave on your chest!

Spiderman
- Give Hydroman the (very) cold shoulder and freeze the problem
  Red Moon
- Turn that handle, but make sure you've put it in the right place first

CLEVER CONTACTS

Wizards, witches, mages lend me your ears. It is here that anyone who is proficient in any adventure can volunteer to join my worthy ranks of Clever Contacts. Simply jot down on a postcard or equivalent, a list of all your achievements and send it off to:
CLEVER CONTACTS, THE WHITE WIZARD'S DUNGEON, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB

CLUB HELP OFFERED

Another club which is works along very similar lines is the **ADVENTURELINE**, a Chelmsford based club run by Roger Garret. The club membership is free of charge (save the cost of an SAE) and for that your get your first free newsletter. Interested? Then write to:
ADVENTURELINE, 52 Micawber Way, Chelmsford, Essex Tel (0245) 442098

EUREKA HOTLINE
Phone 01 947 5626 between 3 and 6pm on a Friday afternoon for the Eureka Hotline. Also Domark will reply to any enquiries by post. Write to: Domark Ltd, 204 Worple Rd, Wimbledon, London SW20 8PN (Please enclose a SAE)

If there are any other clubs out there in the big, wide world and you wish to enrol the White Wizard's readers through his chronicles, then by all means let me know.

HELP OFFERED

Colossal Adventure, Dungeon Adventure, Adventure Quest, Lords of Time, Snowball, Return to Eden, Erik the Viking, Emerald Isle, Red Moon, Most of the Mysterious Adventures, Heroes and Empire of Karn, The Hobbit, Pirate Adventure and Adventureland.
David Varley, 1 Crossman Street, Sherwood, Nottingham NG5 2HR

The Hulk, Twin Kingdom Valley, Eureka (Prehistoric), Eureka (Roman), Valhalla, The Hobbit, Heroes and Empire of Karn, Spiderman, Ring of Power, Gremlins, Dungeon Adventure, Witch's Cauldron, Quest of Merravid, Lords of Time, Urban Upstart, Deadline, Sherlock and Dragonworld.
Kevin Eason, 24 Bulwer Road, Kirkby in Ashfield, Nottingham NG17 8DR
Phone Nottingham 753725 after 4.30pm week days and 2.00pm weekends

Spiderman, The Hulk, Ten Little Indians, Classic Adventure, Hobbit, Quest for the Holy Grail, Voodoo Castle, Pirate Adventure, Mission Impossible, Adventureland and The Count.
S Williams, 32 Hornbeam Close, Horsham, Sussex RH13 5NP

Heroes of Karn, Return to Eden, The Hulk, The Hobbit, Fools Gold, Tombs of Xieops, Golden Baton, Eureka (Prehistoric), Twin Kingdom Valley, and Stranded.
Lawrence Simm, 10 Maddox Cottages, Runnels Lane, Thornton, Merseyside L23 1TR

Spiderman, The Hulk, Gremlins, Claymorgue Castle, Nuclear War Games, Empire and Heroes of Karn, Twin Kingdom Valley, Crystals of Carus, Witch's Cauldron, Mystery of Munroe Manor, Aztec Tomb, The Search For King Solomons Mines and ALL Channel 8 adventures.
G Mitchell, 63 Brownlow St, Haxby Rd, York, YO3 7LW
Tel (0904) 27489 between 10.00 am and 1.00pm or 4.30pm to 8.00pm

Heroes and Empire of Karn, Zim Sala Bim, Ring of Power, Eureka (Roman), Valhalla, Hampstead and Castle of Terror.
Colin Loosemore, 29 Rufus Gardens, Totton, Southampton SO4 3TA

Colossal Adventure, Dungeon Adventure, Lords of Time, Snowball and The Hobbit.
Philip Chan, 7 Rushmead Close, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7RP
Tel (0227) 453911 between 6.00 and 9.00pm only

Pirate Island, Secret Mission, Voodoo Castle, Strange Odyssey, The Count, Mystery Fun House, Pyramid of Doom, Ghost Town, Savage Island (parts I and II), Golden Baton, Claymorgue Castle, Castle of Terror, Subsunk, Urban Upstart, Eric the Viking and Emerald Isle.
K Lees, 25 Whimlatter Place, Newton Aycliffe, Co Durham DL5 5DR

CORRES-PONDENCE

Here are some more tips for you poor people who need instant aid on some adventures. Remember this part is written by the people for the people, so use it to its full.

ZORK I
Resevoir blocking? Press buttons but not blue, turn the bolt with something handy and wait for all to drain.

MASK OF THE SUN
Knowing your left and right when moving a rather large pot could prove useful.

The pedlar is no medicine man . . . His magic cure is nothing but a heap of trouble.

SOME IDEAS FOR LETTERS . . .

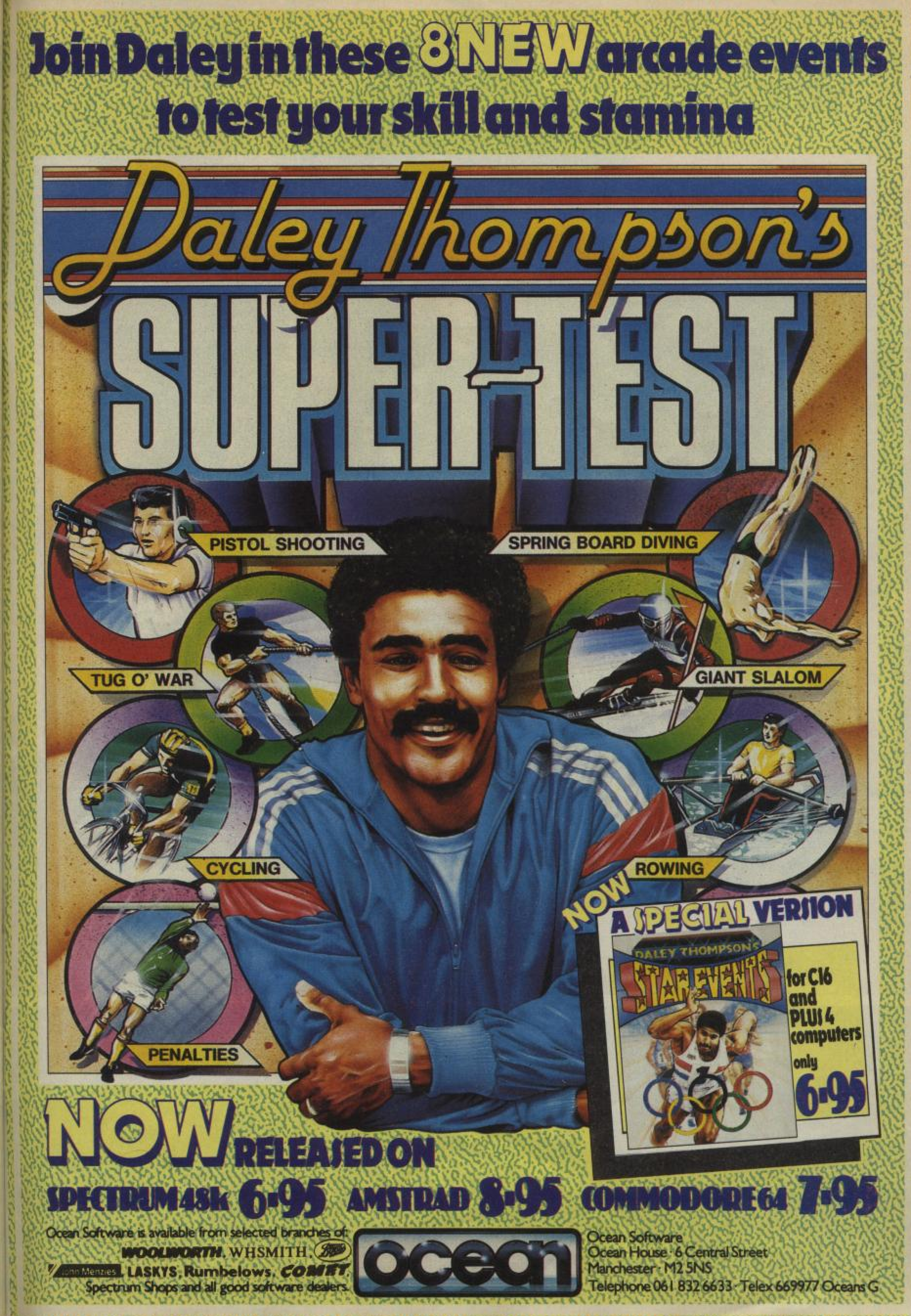
Ahoy there! The White Wizard raises his wand in proud salute of all fellow adventurers, and reminds you all that he is always ready to enter into correspondence with readers on these pages. Each mongh, ol' Whitey will throw open a topic for debate and offer a prize for the Mightiest Manuscript he receives from a Follower of Fantasy — so get out your quills, grab some parchment, and get scribbling!

Just to get the ball rolling, and to allow you all to wield some influence on next month's Wizard Selection of Christmas Crackers, let The White Bearded One know which — of all the games yet released on the Commodore — is in your opinion the Hottest Adventure of All Time? Let us know what you think, and why, and include a couple of solutions to puzzles found in the game.

And don't forget that whatever your message, the Wiz will give your letters full and careful attention — though bear in mind that the Cave of Solitude gets flooded with mail-bags every month and that if you want a personal reply you may have to wait some time! I'll enter into correspondence on any subject, but please don't treat me simply as a Help Column — if you need help with a game by all means write in, but you are liable to find yourself referred in short, sharp, but gentle manner to the Help Offered column.

Next month . . .

- Does the White Wizard's second sight deceive him? Or is this a red-hot Christmas issue coming up, with more reviews than ever before; a competition so hot that you'll have a sun-tan in time for Christmas; plus
- a look at the first Level 9 game to really challenge Infocom for first place on the Throne of Adventure
- news of the powerful new systems being developed behind closed doors to bring you adventures like you've never seen before
- a scoop report on computerised adventures which you play . . . wait for it . . . by EAR!
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STRATEGICALLY SPEAKING

SEAN have map can cursor MASTERSON brings all his intelligence to bear on the thorny problem of wargaming . . .

Computer users will always argue that their machine is the best. After all, who wants to admit that they may have made the wrong purchase? Generally speaking, different machines have their own advantages and disadvantages. As for the Commodore, one of its advantages (as far as wargamers are concerned) is that being American, the choice of high quality software is unsurpassed and only (possibly) equalled by the Atari. **Microprose** have been turning out wargames of consistently improving quality for some time now, and their standard is to be highly commended. **SSI**, the wargamers' equivalent of **Infocom**, produce real mega games, though the high cost of these must be borne in mind.

Whatever you say about Americans, they produce impeccable wargames. Of course, many of these are on disk and Commodore owners are in the rather unfortunate position of having a relatively highly priced disk drive. All I can suggest is that if you don't have one, scrimp and save every penny that could possibly come your way and buy one. In the States, where the standard of living is higher, so many people have drives that it is becoming increasingly difficult to find a wargame producing software house, unwilling to forsake the advantages of leaving complex algorithms and hefty data files (so typical of wargames) on the disk, leaving valuable memory free for other applications. The result is an increasingly expensive hobby.

But it's so rewarding! There is nothing to surpass the mental challenge of recreating a battle in your own living room. A well written wargame will be providing excellent entertainment long after the superficialities of an arcade game have worn off. Anyway, what if you're like me, incapable of getting past the start screen without the greatest difficulty? Seriously, wargaming can be educational and entertaining at the same time. Obviously, they fail to command the immediate attention of a good arcade game, simply because there can't be all that much in the way of advanced graphics or sound effects. In fact such assets would tend to suggest that the game before you was of an inferior quality. More such material is beginning to appear on the American imports but, as most of these are on disk, there aren't the same memory constraints as imposed on cassette games.

The rewards of playing a wargame are far more subtle than many people realise. It all comes down to logistics. Use of logistics decides the outcome of any complex battle. Attack and defence strategies are important as well, of course, but if you fail to take reinforcements and resupply seriously and incorporate them into your plans, you will soon come unstuck.

Consider the horrendous losses at the Battle of Arnhem. British supplies being stolen by Americans or falling into enemy hands during the course of the operation. Consider the necessity of massive troop shipments across the Atlantic in the event of any future conventional conflict in Western Europe. Or the difficulties of keeping the North Sea free from Soviet submarines. Even though Hitler chose to strike against Russia in 1941, after losing the Battle of Britain, he could still have crushed British resistence elsewhere had it not been for the lend lease system offered by the USA.

Planning is everything in a wargame. You have so many compromises to make, and there will always those times when compromises cannot be made. In the highly complex and frightening area of modern warfare, it is estimated that the average operational life of a British paratrooper, deployed in the field, is under one hour. It would appear from face value that their use would be somewhat akin to mindless slaughter. And yet, with their training, the amount of damage they could cause to enemy units in that time would save many more allied lives. It sounds sick to consider trading a human life no matter what the rewards are. Indeed it is, but it is also important to remember that any substantial conflict in our age would not be caused by men of war. It would be caused by the ineptitude of a variety of international politicians. The soldiers have to solve the resulting war with the efficient human life and so once they are put in the position of deploying forces and fighting, they cannot stand apart and question the validity of their actions. They only have the time and authority to question the logic of an immediate course of action and its consequences for those under their command.

There are those who suggest that the Vietnam war was not lost by soldiers but by politicians. Certainly, if the armed forces had been given a free hand to conduct the Falklands war, losses of men and ships would have been lower. Such is hindsight. When you play a wargame, hindsight is the only advantage you really have and it's up to you to see what could have happened. Those who criticise the hobby, saying that such activity is fruitless, really miss the point of wargaming altogether. It can be interesting to see such alternative outcomes to military engagements, but whatever they may be, by the time they become evident, the reason for playing has already passed. It's not the outcome, so much as how you get there that counts. Here's to wargaming.

AN EXPLANATION . . . AND APOLOGY

Gremlins always creep in when you least expect them. As a result of their latest visit to my desk, the explanation of the wargames ratings was omitted from last month's review of *Crusade in Europe* and this could have led to a misunderstanding of my impressions. Belatedly, I present them here, with apologies. They apply to this month's review as well, of course.

Although some of the ratings may appear to be similar, if not identical to those elsewhere in ZZAP! don't be misled. 60% would be a rather low rating in other reviews but is quite high for wargame purposes. There are two main reasons for this. First, by rating games lower, the bad titles which may appear from time to time can be given single figure percentages (bad wargames are intrinsically worse than bad arcade games). Secondly, most wargames benefit from being on disk. Theoretically, this provides them with vast scope. Frequent disc changes are not as inconvenient as in other games. Some SSI games would be good examples of this. Wargaming on computers is a very complex genre and provision needs to be made for future improvements.

Presentation considers packaging, format and clarity.

Graphics in wargames will never be as good as those in arcade games, so these are only viewed in respect to other games of the genre and how effective they are.

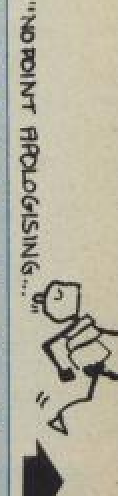
Instructions are extremely important to a wargame. Bad rules can leave a good program unplayable. Consequently, there is a rating for them.

Authenticity is a guidline to how historically (or indeed, theoretically) accurate a game is.

Playability is again only considered with respect to other wargames.

Value for money is going to be the main bone of contention. I still feel that 90% of all wargames are overpriced. This factor is not genre specific.

Overall sums up the impressions of the reviewer.



DECISION IN THE DESERT

Microprose, £14.95, disk, joystick & keys

The second of the Command Series by Microprose arrived on my desk this month. After playing *Crusade in Europe* for several long hours, last month, this provided a way of spending even more time playing at the keyboard. The format of the game is fairly similar to that of the first in the series, but for those of you who missed (or just didn't read) that review, I'll briefly summarise the details again.

The game comes packaged as a single disk, complete with glossy, thick instruction booklet. The game attempts to cover five of the most important battles from the African campaign. These selectable scenarios are **Sidi Barrani, Operation Crusader, Gazala, First Alamein** and **Alam Halfa**.

The manual must be read (as is the norm with wargames of this depth) and Microprose have kept its presentation up to the high standards they set in *Crusade in Europe*. The first sections of the manual are fairly similar in style to those you would find in a conventional wargame including details of components, game options, followed by a description of the play sequence. Of course, loading instructions are present too.

When you come to load the game, it is immediately obvious that good presentation doesn't end with the box and manual. Apart from all the options available being clearly displayed on the screen, there is a rather amusing 'general' who briefs you on the game from behind a podium, lit by spotlight. You also find frequent references to 'day codes', which are listed throughout the manual. They provide a simple, yet effective method of program protection. Of course the manual could be copied, but there's a lot of it!

One of the most interesting features of the Command Series games is the absence of strict game turns. It is possible to freeze the game at any time, but otherwise the computer processes the condition and progress of each unit every four game hours. This means that whilst in play, you have to concentrate totally on the game. This results in several distinct advantages, not least of which is demanding play. Two player games also become very easy to set up differently. Just how fast the game progresses may be varied by the player. Obviously beginners can choose a relatively slow rate of play, making the game more appealing to the uninitiated. There are also options to bias play to varying degrees. A slight aside here. In last month's review, I mentioned that this didn't really work too well, the form of artificial intelligence being apparently deficient. As this game uses many of the same routines as its predecessor, I expected it to be similarly disappointing this time. Could it be that my *Crusade* disk was somehow faulty, or have the routines been played with before their implementation in *Decision*? Whatever the cause, there is definitely a better feel to play in this one. It still isn't perfect, but without more frequent (and annoying) disk access, there would seem to be little room for improvement in this area.

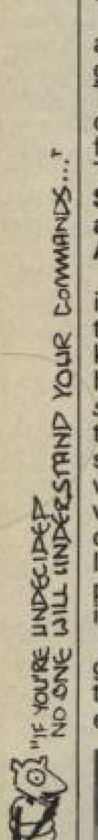
Once play has begun, you are presented with a scrolling map showing detailed terrain features, with all the units scattered about (starting disposition of forces depends on variants chosen for each scenario). Note that there is a variable limited intelligence option available.

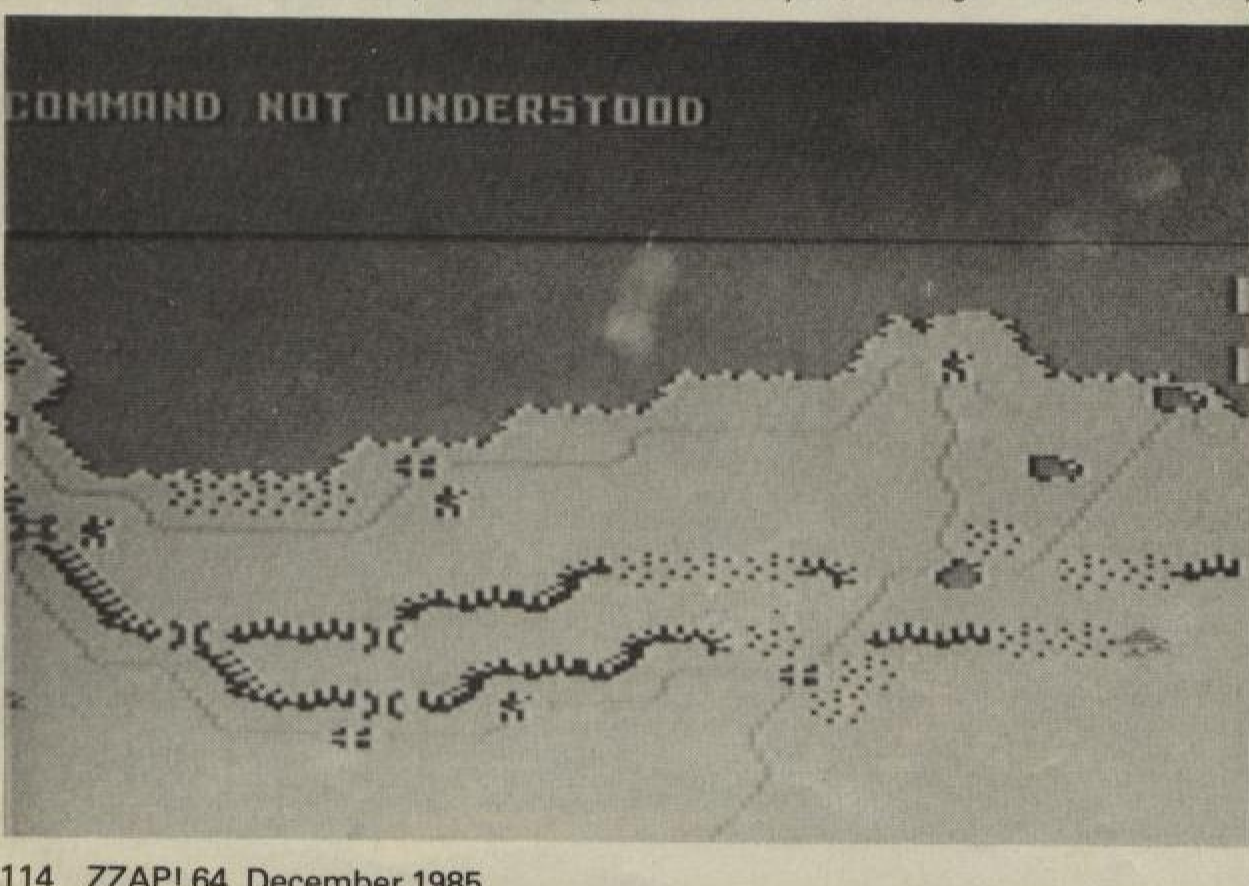
Units may be displayed as either icons or symbols. Symbols are nearer to the standard markings used in wargaming, whereas icons are more explanatory in nature. The manual provides details of both and the display type may be changed at any point during play. Scale is usually on the divisional level but because of the nature of the African campaign, many smaller *ad hoc* units are also displayed. The units are colour coded to differentiate between German, British and Italian.

The game has very friendly input, with unit selection via a joystick, two types of commands (action and objective), flashback features, unit and game status modes. Anyone who has played *Crusade* should find *Decision in the Desert* very easy to learn. There are few features anyone will find confusing and play will be faster and more rewarding as a result.

The victory conditions for the scenarios are balanced well for both sides. The historical notes provide interesting reading before play. It really is impressive how good strategies can pay off, assuming of course that your opponent hasn't read the notes either. Because of the variety of options, it's easy to set yourself a real challenge. One of the variants on the **Gazala** scenario is mind numbingly difficult if you chose the Axis forces.

Doubtless, the Command Series is growing on me with increased familiarity, and I do find desert warfare particularly fascinating, but even so this game is an improvement over *Crusade in Europe*. It comes down to the simple fact that *Decision in the Desert* plays better. It's more of a fee flowing game, as desert warfare should be. There is still more challenge to be had from SSI games (sorry, but comparison is inevitable). However, the Microprose titles are cheaper and just as well presented. If their quality continues to rise, we are all in for a treat.





Presentation 70%
Very good, but there could still be some improvement.

Graphics 55%
Not bad background but some of the icons and symbols would benefit from improved presentation.

Instructions 75%
Better explained than in *Crusade*, allowing easier access to game features.

Authenticity 75%
Very good portrayal of the campaign.

Playability 68%
Fairly straightforward game system but the lack of game turns, whilst being an interesting idea, can lead to some problems initially.

Value for money 60%
It really is very good value but ideally, wargames need not be so expensive.

Overall 79%
Perhaps the game system is more suited to desert warfare because the whole thing is a superior implementation to the first title in the series. Can't wait for the third.

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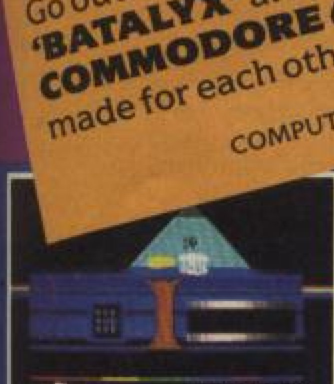
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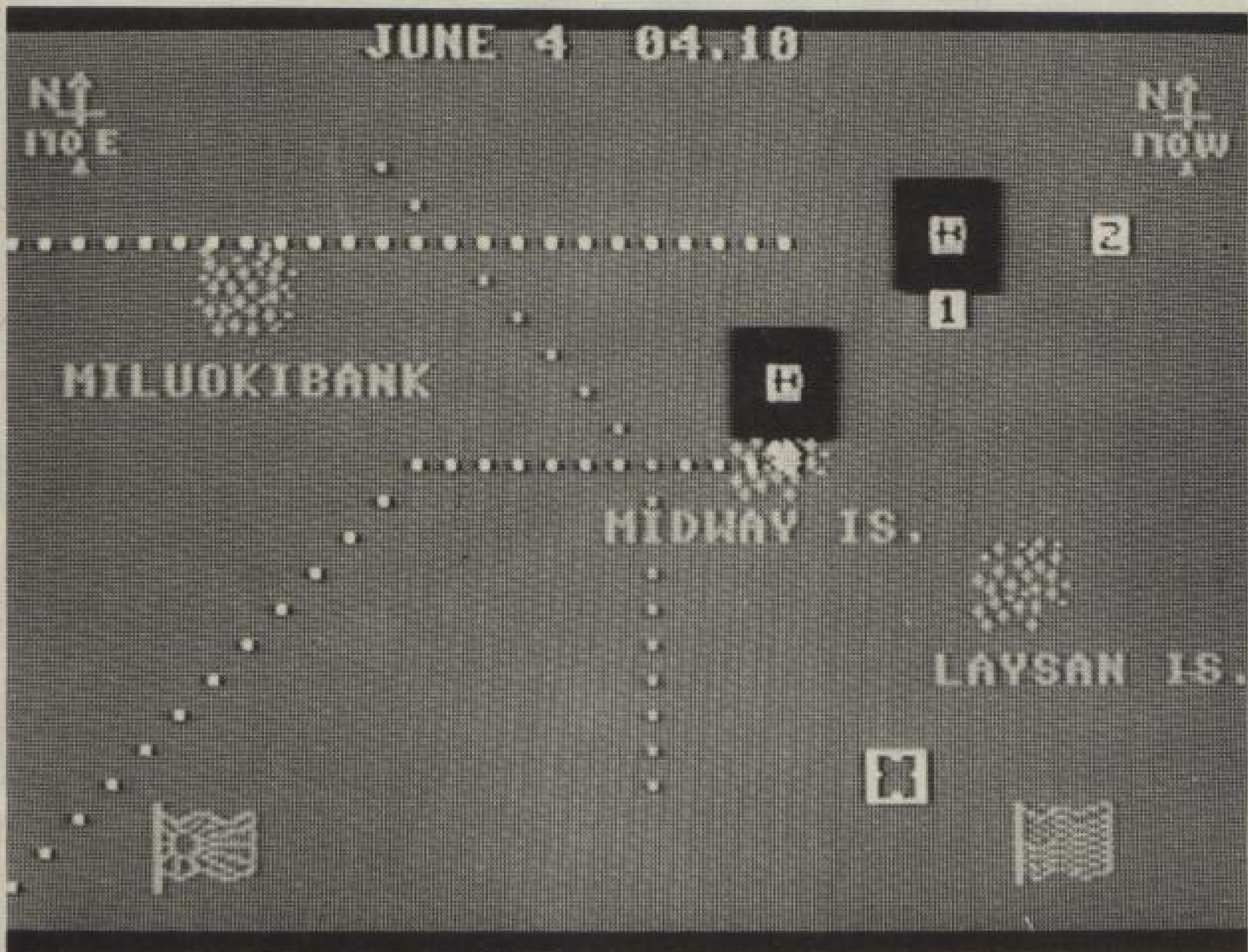
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BATTLE FOR MIDWAY

PSS, £9.95 cass, £12.95 disk, joystick and/or keys

Although it can hardly be claimed to be a new product, *Battle For Midway* was, in its day, one of the most ambitious wargame titles ever released by a UK software house, in terms of production and scope. Now seems as good a time as any to have a look at this ageing game.

The game, as its title suggests, is a strategic simulation based on one of the most crucial battles from the Pacific; the Japanese attack on the US base at Midway Island six months after their devastating strike on Pearl Harbour. You play the part of the American forces defending the Island. Two fleets, two search aircraft groups and the variety of forces based at Midway are all you have to defend against a powerful and modern grouping of Japanese fleets.

Once the game is loaded you are presented with several sequential options including use of joystick, game level and game speed. The manual is presented in such a way as to guide you through your first game, a kind of learn as you play technique. Once the game type is selected, you are presented with a strategic display. Depending on the level of your game, the courses of the Japanese forces may or may not be shown. Using a cursor you can select information on any of your units, give movement orders, launch attack aircraft or just stay on holding status. Eventually, your search aircraft finds a Japanese fleet and it stays visible while the search unit remains in contact. You can select a search unit's report at this stage and you are shown an overhead view of the enemy fleet, giving you some idea of what to expect when your forces come into contact with it.

Combat is automatic when units are in a certain proximity, rather like the Zone of Control effect in conventional wargames. Combat is via the joystick. Depending on the nature of the opposing units it could be air-to-air, air-to-ground or ground-to-air. The displays vary as a result but from this point on, it's a case of how good your joystick handling ability is.

Airborne units must be used wisely in defence or attack formations and a watch must be kept on how much flight time there is remaining for a given unit before it plunges into the sea. Aircraft carrier decks must also be maintained wisely if confusion is to be avoided during take offs and landings.

Strategy revolves around the fact that if you hit the Japanese forces hard enough and before they manage to hit you, you've won. Essentially, this involves keeping the enemy off the island itself, keeping your aircraft carriers afloat and sinking the enemy carriers. Time is an important factor as you set the rate at which time passes during the game. On a high level, the amount of time you have to respond to sightings is minimal.

Battle For Midway has impressive points. Presentation is to a very high standard as far as British products go. The game itself is fast and responsive with rules almost anybody could pick up. Nevertheless, from a wargaming point of view, it is most seriously flawed. The main problem is the necessity of being successful in the arcade sections of the game. They don't really do that much harm to the game as such (although the graphics could have been better) but they are out of place in a wargame.

The argument could be taken from the opposite point of view. The strategic elements are out of place in an arcade game. Unfortunately, the two different kinds of gaming do not merge well and the result is a sad mishmash of incongruity and plain incoherency. The authenticity of the game suffers heavily as a result. If you are in command of the US forces (as the manual suggests), you should hardly be responsible for personally shooting down enemy aircraft. Perhaps PSS tried to please everybody by bringing out a commercially appealing wargame but I expect they pleased very few in the end.

Presentation 68%
Well printed rules, clear options and 'serious' approach.

Graphics 71%
Good use of strategic display and silhouettes but poor in arcade sections.

Instructions 57%
Simple but lacking in important details.

Authenticity 49%
In map mode, movement and intelligence are well handled but the arcade sections make a farce of the rest of the game.

Playability 51%
Arcade gamers will probably fare best.

Value for money 56%
Can provide a challenging game on high levels but for all the wrong reasons.

Overall 51%
Bad judgement from a marketing point of view, rather than bad programming makes this a mundane product.

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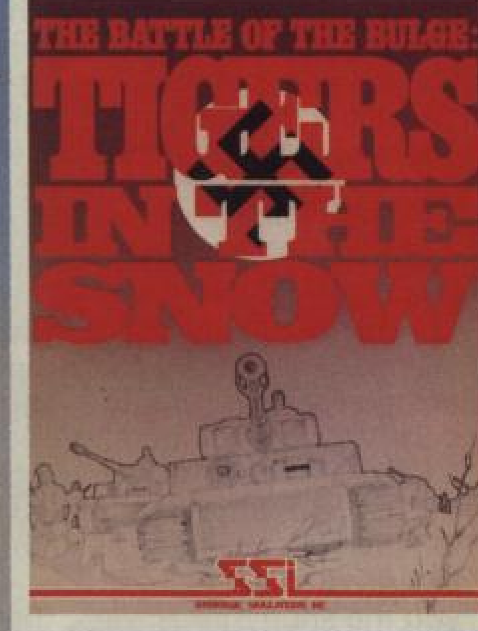
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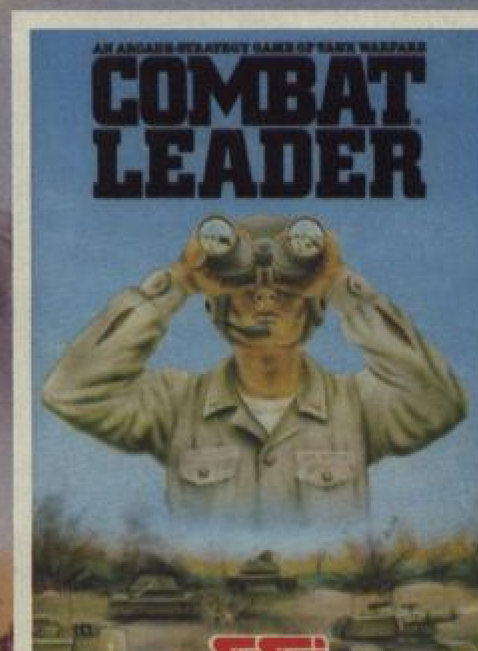
Who will be the victor and who the vanquished?

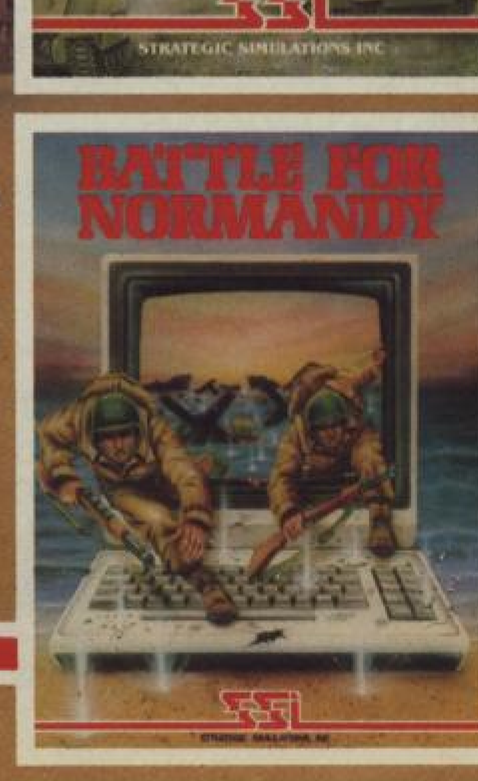
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MORE WHEEEEE, SPLAT (GENTLY)

An update on how the CRASH/ZZAP!/AMTIX! Dr Barnardo and Action Group charity parachute jump is going, as the clock ticks a way the seconds to takeoff time for some hapless Newsfield Nutters. . . .



Now that the votes are beginning to come in there is an air of panic circulating through the Towers. At the top of the jump league table is our very own lovable (almost), affable (rarely) and helpful (never), Denise the Subscription Queen. This unenviable position is due to one man, who shall remain nameless though readers of CTW may know to whom we refer. As an **Incentive** to the rest of you the anonymous donor has promised to keep sending in the loot to keep Denise at the top of the list, that could cost him a lot of money. Denise is trying to establish exactly what it is that he wants to make him renege on his promise. Another high flyer is ZZAP's very own mini hero Julian Rignall. So far the voters have placed him firmly on the tarmac, if not actually in the aircraft itself, a couple of readers offered extra loot if Rignall would make the jump without the aid of a chute — he is giving the idea some thought.

In the meantime the software industry is beginning to put up goodies for the voters to win, we will publish a list of the prizes on offer in future issues.

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Last year Dr Barnardo's helped over 9000 children, with your help they could help even more next year. If all of our readers responded with just one pound then Barnardo's and the Action group could benefit by £100,000. Besides the invaluable help that you will be giving the two charities you stand a good chance of winning one of the many prizes being offered by the software industry and having the satisfaction of knowing that you have put one of the Newsfield Nutters in a very awkward position — 2000 feet above the ground.

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THE COMPETITIONY BIT

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(1) . . . .

(2) . . . .

(3) . . . .

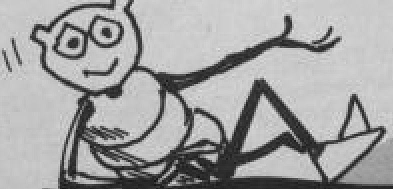
In fifteen words or less, using your skill, judgement and a pen complete the phrase below in the most apt and original way . . . .

I WANT LLOYD MANGRAM TO JUMP BECAUSE

. . . .

STOP PRESS! Oli offers original cover painting as a prize for the voters in the Loony Leap Charity Competition!

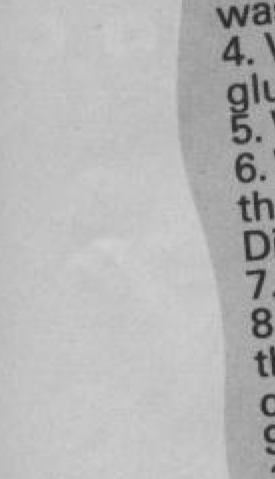
THE SECOND EVER ZZAP! QUIZ



Last month's ZZAP! Quiz proved rather popular, so here's another to keep you on your toes. We thought this time we would simply wear you down with the sheer volume of work needed to win the goodies! Nothing could really be simpler — just answer the questions below which have been loving culled from past ZZAP! by the trend from Berkhampstead himself. You must get them all correct of course, and the first three entries drawn from the bag will each receive £25 worth of software of their choice and a ZZAP! T-shirt. The three runners-up will each receive a ZZAP! T-shirt. Entries on a postcard (or the back of a sealed envelope) please, and for goodness sake, make sure you put your name and address on as well as ours — it does help — your T-shirt size and choice of software in case you win! Quiz closes on December 16, so get your entries in before then to: ZZAP! DECEMBER QUIZ, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB.



1. What game was referred to as 'The new Miner 2049'er'?
2. 'This triumph of gaming and common sense should prove the most popular . . .' began Bob Wade of which game?
3. 'This has to be the best ever driving game. It makes *Pole Position* look like a Sunday afternoon in a Morris Minor.' What driving game was this?
4. What Sizzler got— **Lastability 91%** It's more powerful than superglue?
5. Who converted the 64 hit *Spy Hunter* onto the Spectrum?
6. Who said, '. . . he seems to have swiped all the superlatives listed in the Complete Oxford Dictionary (and Lloyd Mangram's Long Word Dictionary is far too expensive for me)!!?
7. To what game was he referring? A easy one that!
8. The review said, 'The aliens themselves present little challenge to the player — the real skill is in negotiating the landscape safely and quickly.' It was a Sizzler, but what was it?
9. Which game talks about each game costing £10,000 to launch?
10. If we mentioned Lunar Rover, top speed 40mph, what would we be set for?
11. Who never worries about being thirsty?
12. When Paul said, 'I was beginning to hope that these joystick waggling games had been given up for good, alas this is not to be,' which game did he mean?
13. What got **Sound 98%** To date, state-of-the-art music, eat your heart out Bernstein?
14. 'On entering a house I was still more surprised, what nice decor and furniture,' said JR about what?
15. JR called it a mini-masterpiece, PS said it was a little masterpiece and GP said, 'Yet another quality product'. Name the game.





All the questions relate to past issues of ZZAP! 64 — all you have to do is find the reference to get it correct! Good luck!

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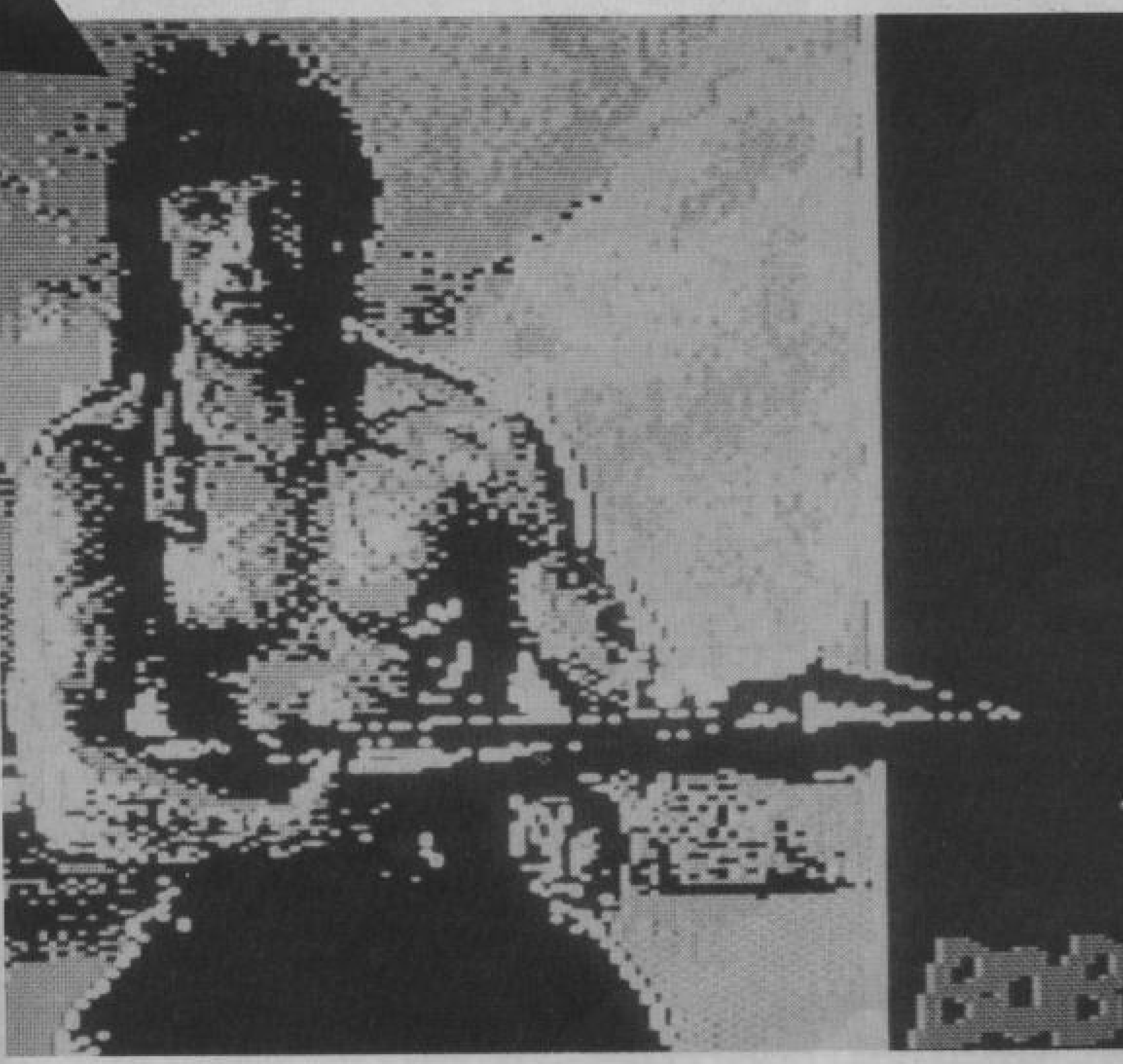
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If such 'names' as LLAMA, GM3, ARC86, RS4, GR3 and MACH81 are familiar to you then chances are you're a regular user of the Compunet Chatline facility. If they mean nothing whatsoever then don't worry as things will certainly become clear over the next few issues. Each month we will be running a feature on just one of the many interesting aspects of Compunet, such as the art and music obtainable free of charge via your modem. The quality of the art available is illustrated perfectly by Bob Stevenson's (RS4) picture of Rambo, shown here on this page. You ought to see his Hedrix and animated Max Headroom then! In fact next month you will, as for our first main feature we shall be taking a look at the graphics side of things: Renowned Compunet artists and their work if you like.

Not only does Compunet have plenty to offer, it's also ridiculously easy to use. Logging on for example is simplicity in itself, assuming you don't have a bad phone line that is! You merely enter your ID followed by your password and you're in . . .

Each user has a personal electronic mailbox (MBX) for sending and receiving private messages to and from other users. For more social banter one can make use of the Chatline facility. This allows a large group of users to 'converse' freely and even lends itself to an etiquette of its own! The Chatline is great fun and quite unlike any other method of communicating — it's not at all like talking direct over the phone or face to face. It really is something else.

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YOU COULD WIN SOFTWARE BY VOTING FOR THE ZZAP! READERS TOP 30 CHART!

Every month we give away an amazing **£40 worth of software** to the first person whose ZZAP! READERS TOP 30 VOTING FORM is pulled from the bag. The winner also receives a super ZZAP! 64 T-shirt. Four runners up get a T-shirt and a ZZAP! Cap. So all you have to do is fill out the form below, remembering to put your name and address down, list your five favourite games in descending order (remember they must be released games that you have played), state which software you would like (to a total value of £40) should you win, and your T-shirt size (S,M,L). Then send your form in to the address shown.

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Game (and software house)

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I am voting for the following five games:

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4 ....

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r December 1985

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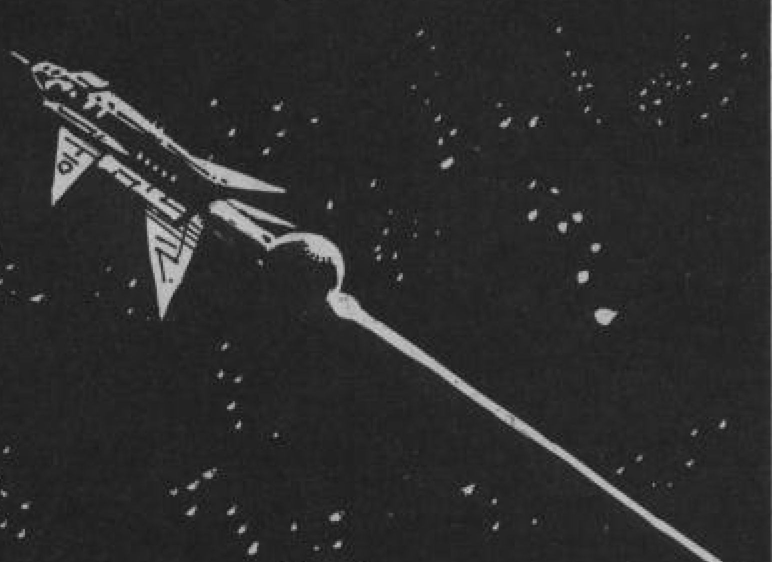


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Winner (£40 worth of software plus T-shirt): **Mark Fitzgerald**, Battersea, London;
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WINNERS: WINNERS: WINNERS: WINNERS:

LIVING ON A KNIFE EDGE

CRL had 50 copies of their exciting new action game *Blade Runner* up for grabs to the people who could spot the differences between two pictures. Unusually, the pictures were full half tone rather than the more normal line drawing. The 50 winners are:
J Basannnavar, Surrey, KT12 2RH; Simon Bell, Worcs, DY10 3YU; Jamie Bennett, London, SE9 1EW; Wayne Byrom, Manchester, M13 9AN; Simon Cooper, Bishops Stortford, Herts; Robin Davies, Cornwall, TR16 4RN; Sanjay Deswani, London, SW18 5QT; Aaron Dickinson, Cumbria, LA12 0SL; Andrew Dudley, Hants, SO1 2PG; Neil Elliott, Liverpool, L13 6RU; K Elliott, Kent, BR2 9PS; David Fairweather, Lancs, BB3 3AZ; Geoffrey Hammond, Surrey, GU25 4EW; Graeme Clark, Lancs, OL15 0BT; Jonathan Hailey, Herts, SG12 0XX; P Hall, Hull, HU4 6TT; N Hall, Herts, SG12 8LF; Maxwell Hodgetts, Birmingham, B31 5DP; Jeremy Hogg, Kidderminster, Worcs; G Kangis, Woking, Surrey; Jason Kennedy, Liverpool, L32; R Knight, Norwich, Norfolk; Sidharath Mahay, Birmingham, B24 9BD; Christopher Mcaleer, Glasgow, G73 3QY; Shaun Mccabe, Carlisle, CA2 4HZ; M Mcclelland, West Mids, B93 9LQ; D Morrison, London, N1; E Nicholson, Herts, HP1 2QG; Occupier, Dublin 18, Ireland; Gordon Ogle, Cardiff, CF1 8LF; Stuart Oliver, West Mids, DY3 3LF; Paul Oliver, Glasgow, G64 3JE; S Pashby, Hull, HU5 2LS; Jayesh Patel , London, NW10; Ian Pinto , Surrey, SM3 8QR; Allan Potter, Suffolk, IP13 9DL; Simon Fisher, Scotland, TD8 6ND; James Smith, Milton Keynes, MK8 8EU; Stephen Edwards, Essex, SS7 5JR; Shane Stokes, Dublin, Ireland; Terry Orman, Southampton, SO2 9LA; J Tipper, Stourbridge, West Mids; J Tunstall, Cleveland, TS26 0JW; Steven Turnbull, Essex, SS17 8EH; M Turner, Kent, DA15 8PH; W Robinson, Surrey, KT23 3JQ; Glenn Warner, Middlesex, EN3 5XX; M Widdows, Lancs, PR6 8UB; J Wiggell, Hants, SP9; Ray Young, Lanarkshire, ML12;



GOLD MEDALS ALL ROUND

From **US Gold** we were offering 25 lucky winners a copy of this fabulous new sports action game compendium, and they were:
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WIN DESIGNER SPORTSWEAR

With the launch of *Monty on the Run*, **Gremlin Graphics** wanted everyone to get fit and try winning a marvellous grey tracksuit with the Gremlin logo and complete with those of ZZAP! and CRASH on the front. Worth £19.95, the 20 exceptionally lucky winners are:
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WINNERS : WINNERS : WINNERS : WINNERS :



RUPERT & THE TOYMAKER'S PARTY

Argus Press Software were offering six Rupert Annuals, plus six genuine Rupert scarves (as wholeheartedly endorsed by Gary Penn) and copies of the second Rupert game to six top winners in this competition to design a companion for the little bear. 29 other runners-up receive a copy of the game.

The Winners:
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Runners-up
William Church, Cornwall, PL14 6EH; Michael Daniel, Oxford, OX3 7NL; Mark Easton, S Yorks, DN5 8SF; Paul England, Liverpool, L22 6RB; David Fairweather, Lancs, BB3 3AZ; Jonathan Gilbert, South Humberside, DN20 9HQ; Michael Griffiths, Kent, ME1 3LH; Robert Gunns, Suffolk, NR33 0QQ; Jason Halliwell, Lancs, BL2 2QN; James Hawnt, Clwyd, LL12 8US; Malcolm Hutchinson, W Yorks, WF3 1LL; Samantha Lawrence, London, E18 1HY; James Le Fevre, Surrey, GU5 0PW; Matthew Lyon, Hants, RG22 5RH; Steven Medcraft, Essex, SS6 8BP; Steven Miller, Lancs, OL6 8BX; Lee Neary, West Lothian, EH49 6LH; Rebecca Payne, Kent, BR2 7JU; Avi Pinhas, London, NW4 4TD; Barry Pringle, Perivale, Middlesex; Nigel Proctor, W Sussex, PO19 2AR; Simon Ratcliffe, Derbys, DE4 4ER; Sid Reeves, Birmingham, B27 6JG; Stephen Smith, Middx, HA8 5BQ; Simon Sykes, Worcs, WR14 2ML; Andrew Thorne, Berks, RG13 4TE; Paul Tudor, West Mids, B68 0EF; Sharon Wade, Scarborough, YO11 1PS; Carlo Wiggins, Dorset, BH19 1PQ.

How to enter your challenge

1. State games and scores clearly on the form provided (or a close copy). You can give fewer than four games if you wish.
2. State level achieved at the end of each game, either the wave number (if possible), rating or some indication of how far you went into the game along with the time taken to complete the game.
3. In the space provided write further details about the game which might help to confirm your score. If it's an arcade adventure then write the percentage and if it has a time limit or bonus then state how long was left and what bonus was awarded. Other details include things like the game crashing because of the high-score achieved or whether the game resets at a certain point. Any other relevant details will be useful.
5. Post your entry to: Zzap Challenge, Zzap! 64, **PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1DB**

Yes, I'm ready to challenge the Zzap champion on the following games.

Game.................................. Score.................. Level reached.................. Time taken..................
Other details..

Game.................................. Score.................. Level reached.................. Time taken..................
Other details..

Game.................................. Score.................. Level reached.................. Time taken..................
Other details..

Game.................................. Score.................. Level reached.................. Time taken..................
Other details..

Did you exploit any cheats, bugs or special techniques (inc. auto rapid fire) to obtain any of these scores? (Yes/no) ... (If 'Yes', give full details on a separate piece of paper.)

I promise these scores are genuine. Signed ....
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* Note due to memory limitations ACE on the C16 and VIC20 (+8K Ram) do not have any ground objects.

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WHO DARES WINS II

Alligata, £7.95 cass, joystick only

Fancy being a sole commando armed with only a machine gun and a few grenades with the task of capturing eight enemy outposts against massive opposition? Well, with the latest release from Alligata you now can. *Who Dares Wins II* puts you in that exact situation where, with adrenalin flowing, you are put in a position where kill or be killed is the only option.

The action takes place on a vertically scrolling, detailed landscape and you have to fight every inch of the way to capture the eight enemy outposts. When you start the game you are really put in at the deep end. Shattered buildings lie each side of you and the only choice is to go forward across the bare and blasted landscape.



This game is like nothing I've ever seen in the arcades or anywhere else, for that matter. It's great! I must admit, I'm pleased to see such a game available for the 64. And to see one so playable and well programmed is marvellous as well. It's important to note however, that this game does suffer from a few aesthetic problems, if nothing else. First, the forced perspective is really forced! You can get away with this kind of thing on arcade games because of their massive screens, whereas here, I cringed at some of the effects on screen. Also, some of the bullets seem to change course slightly, from time to time. When you think you're dead on target it can come as something as a shock to find your enemy still coming for you, just after shooting at him half a dozen times. Moans and groans aside, Who Dares Wins II *is not half bad (as we Northerners are supposed to say). Get yer paws on this one and you should find yourself wrapped up in an addictive game.*



As you can expect the landscape is absolutely infested with the enemy — these blue and brown uniformed soldiers emerge from the side, jumping off buildings or come running from behind trees and instantly start attacking you. Luckily their country isn't too hot on the technological scene and they're only armed with single shot rifles. Your brilliant sub machine gun is capable of pounding out around three rounds a second making life a little easier. Even so, the sheer number of the enemy is sometimes overwhelming.

Across the landscape are scattered many hazards and traps. Quicksand awaits an unwary commando who hasn't got his eyes peeled and pools of water with crumbling banks claim anyone who strays too near their edge.

Other hazards include soldiers with deadly accurate mortars, although they can be disposed of by lobbing one of your limited grenades at them. You start the game with six grenades and more are parachuted in to help you on your way. When they land simply run over the box and another three grenades are added to your total.

Occasionally you come across enemy vehicles, either manually driven or robot controlled. These always move across the screen, although the robot controlled tanks move left and right in an attempt to gain a line with you so they can fire one of their missiles accurately. There are also railway lines which have to be crossed. These are pretty hazardous since little railway carriages trundle along the lines every so often. All these vehicles can be disposed of with a well-aimed grenade and give a nice points bonus if successfully destroyed.

The real danger comes from the skies where two types of planes, one which flies across the screen and one which flies down the screen, threaten your existence. The one which flies across the screen drops very accurate bombs (plenty of running needed here) but the ones that fly down the screen are by far the most deadly. These strafe as they bear down on you at high speed giving you only a split second to react.

Occasionally you come across one of your allies. The only trouble is that he's in rather dire straights since he's tied to a post and about to get shot by a soldier. Shooting his would-be executioner gains a points bonus for saving your fellow soldier.

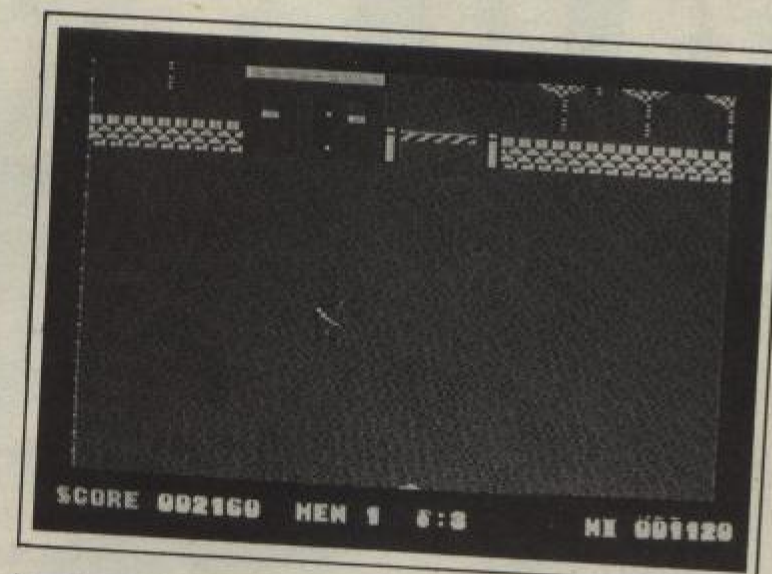
As you approach the outpost there are rivers with tiny bridges which are the only way across. You have to shoot the soldiers on the far side if you are to get across safely since a single accurate shot from them as you cross spells certain doom. Sometimes soldiers in boats patrol these waters although they don't pose

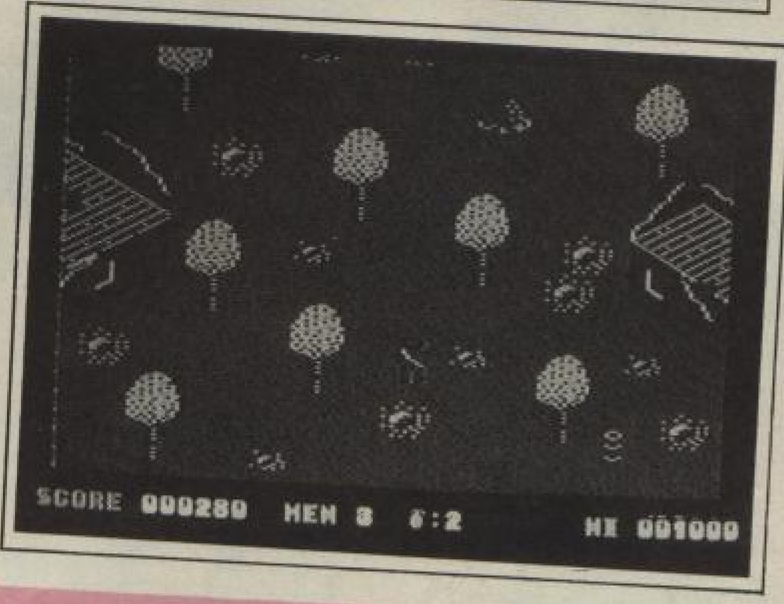




Jokily credited as programmed by Tommy Atkins, Alligata has come up with a real classic. Despite the shady ethics and gory scenario the game is just so much fun to play. The backdrops, though having a slightly garish colour choice, are of a very high quality indeed with the soldier able to move in and out of the buildings convincingly. Though having an initial resemblance to Frontline *you soon realise there's a lot more in it, the game design obviously having had a considerable amount of time spent on it. All in all the best game of it's type to date and anyone else who's thinking of attempting anything similar will have to go a long way too beat it.*







any threat to your soldier.

When the outpost is finally reached many soldiers pour from it and a pitched battle with you in the middle ensues. It's then up to your skill and reflexes to survive. If you manage to capture the outpost then you automatically go forward to tackle the next, and far more treacherous mission.

On later levels, soldiers in pot-holes and a far more hazardous landscape try to lessen your already slim chances of survival.

You start the game with three lives although extra ones can be earned at regular point intervals.

Presentation 84%
Nice demo mode and title tune.

Graphics 91%
Excellent and varied backdrops with heaps of sprites.

Sound 82%
Great title tune and spot FX.

Hookability 93%
Desire to capture the next post is huge . . .

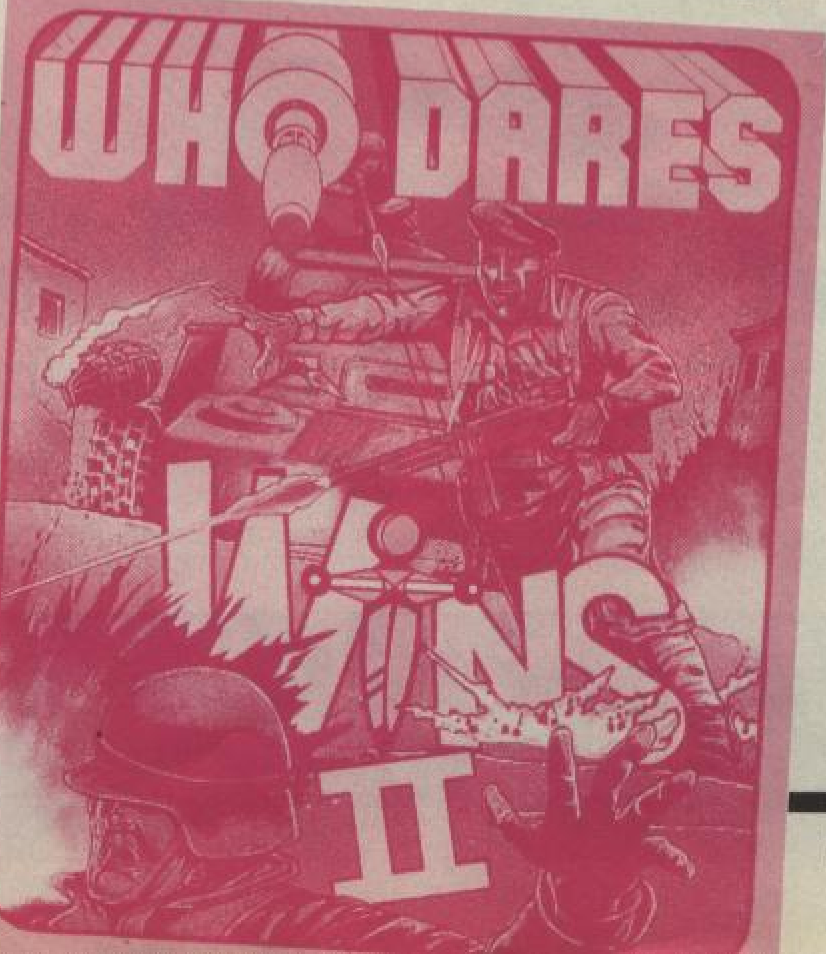
Lastability 90%
And it's not easy by any means.

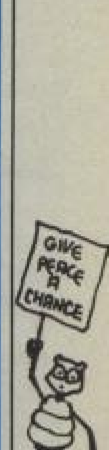
Value For Money 92%
Well cheap for a well crucial game.

Overall 90%
One of the best arcade shoot em downs yet.

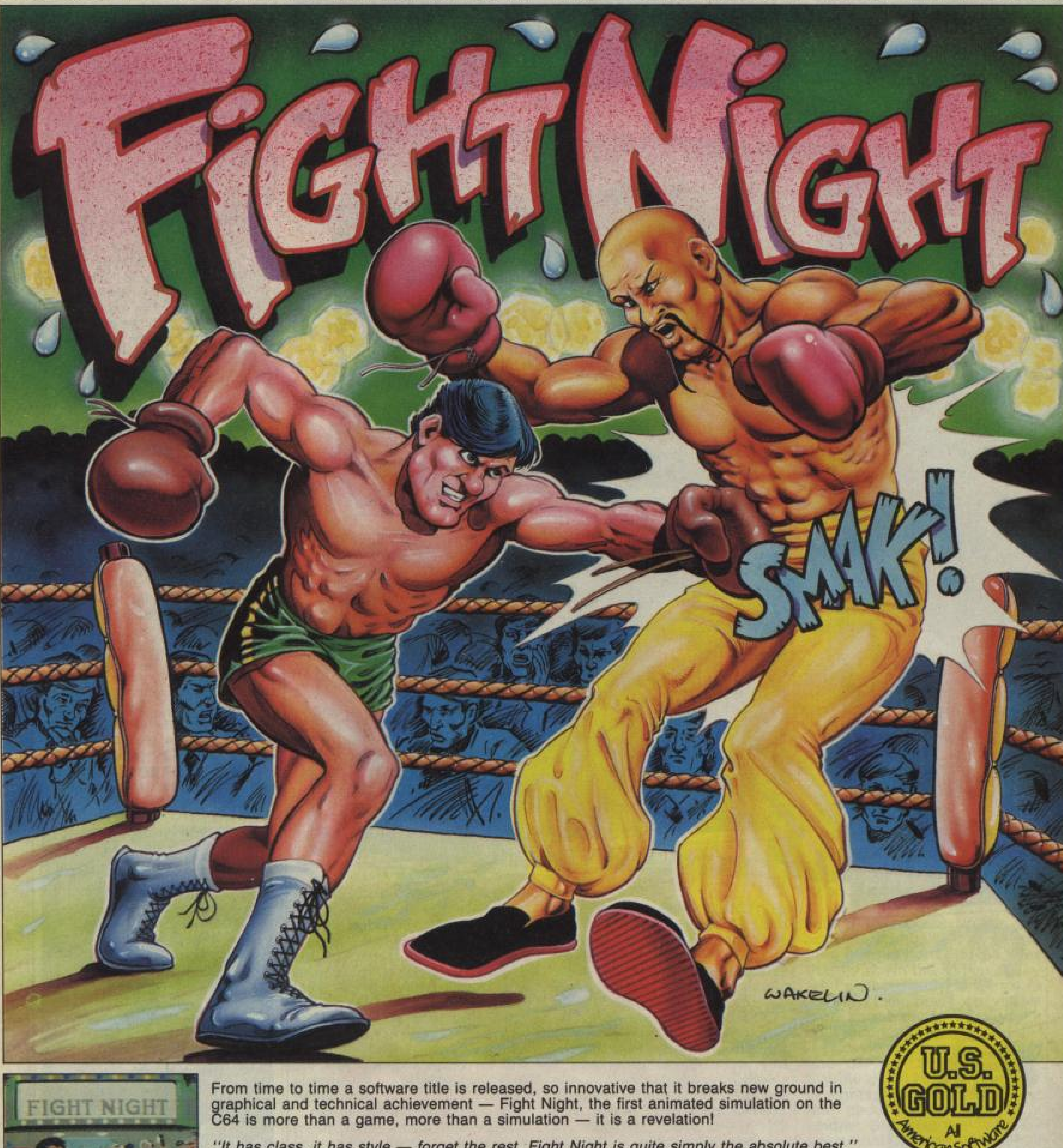


This is a highly original arcade style shoot em up which in some respects looks similar to the first screen of an old arcade classic Frontline. *Blasting enemy is the name of the game and it's all done in really gory style — fantastic! The landscapes are incredible — tons of ruins, railway lines and other hazards await an unsuspecting player . . . it's just like real life where you just don't know what to expect next. This is one of the top arcade programs of the year — miss it at your peril.*





M'LORDS, LADIES, & GENTLEMEN... FRESH FROM AMERICA U.S. GOLD PROUDLY PRESENTS... THE UNDISPUTED CHAMPION...





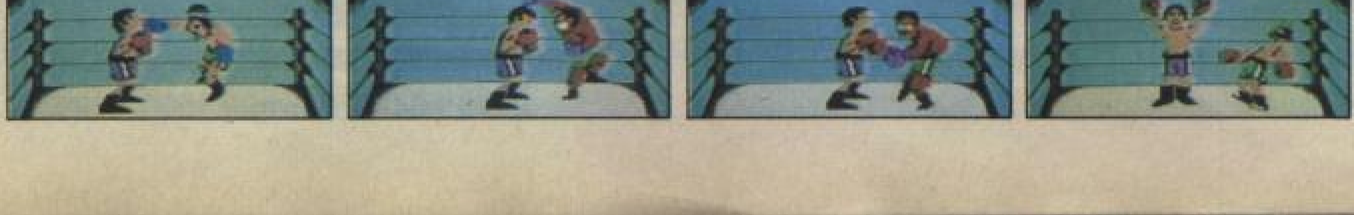
From time to time a software title is released, so innovative that it breaks new ground in graphical and technical achievement — Fight Night, the first animated simulation on the C64 is more than a game, more than a simulation — it is a revelation!

"It has class, it has style — forget the rest, Fight Night is quite simply the absolute best." — Tony Takoushi Computer & Video Games/Computer Trade Weekly.

"It's like watching and playing a cartoon computer version of Rocky. Fight Night has pushed the graphical capabilities of the C64 to its utmost limits" — Zzap 64 November.

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Sydney Development Corp.



Available for Commodore 64

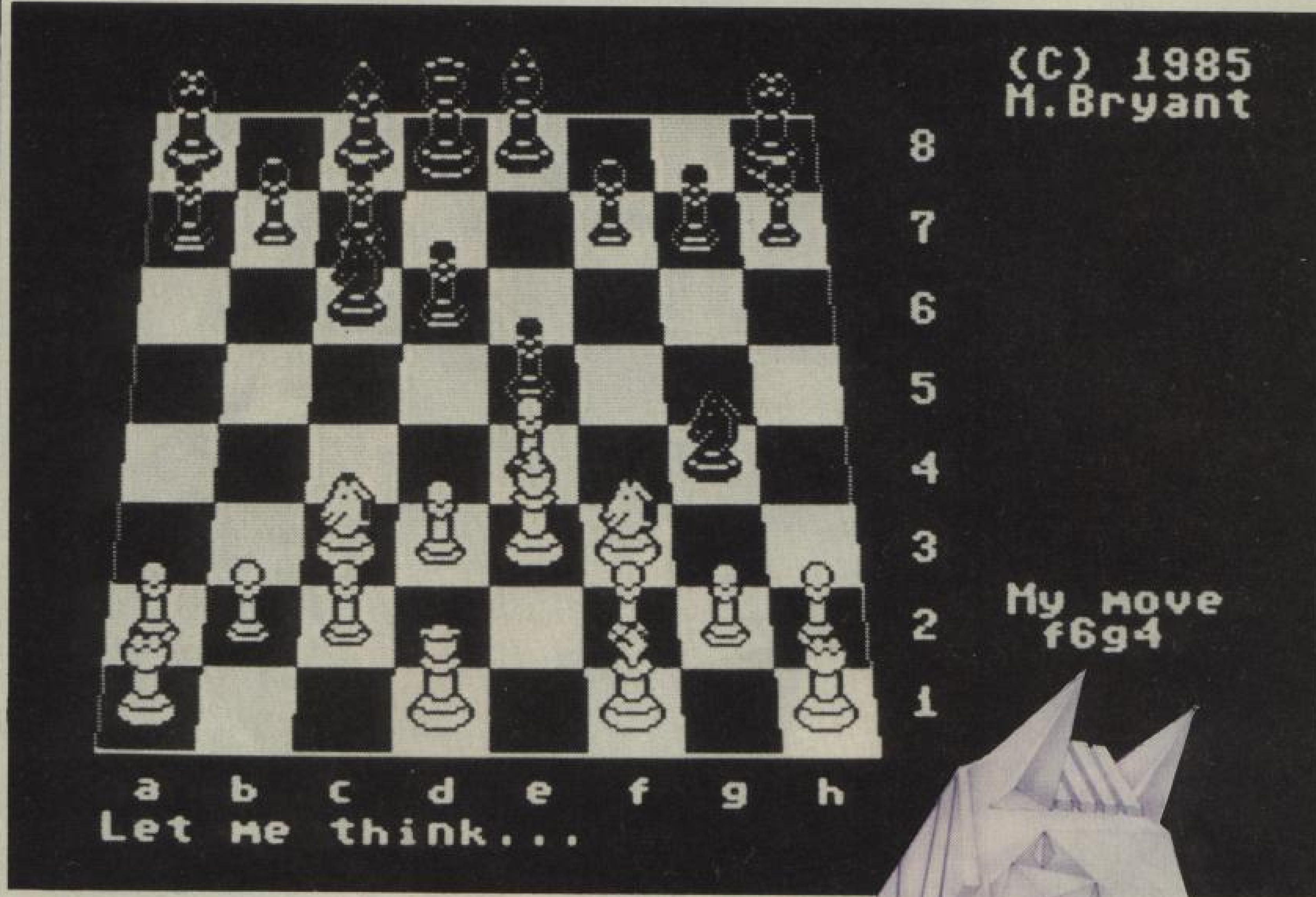
Cassette £9.95

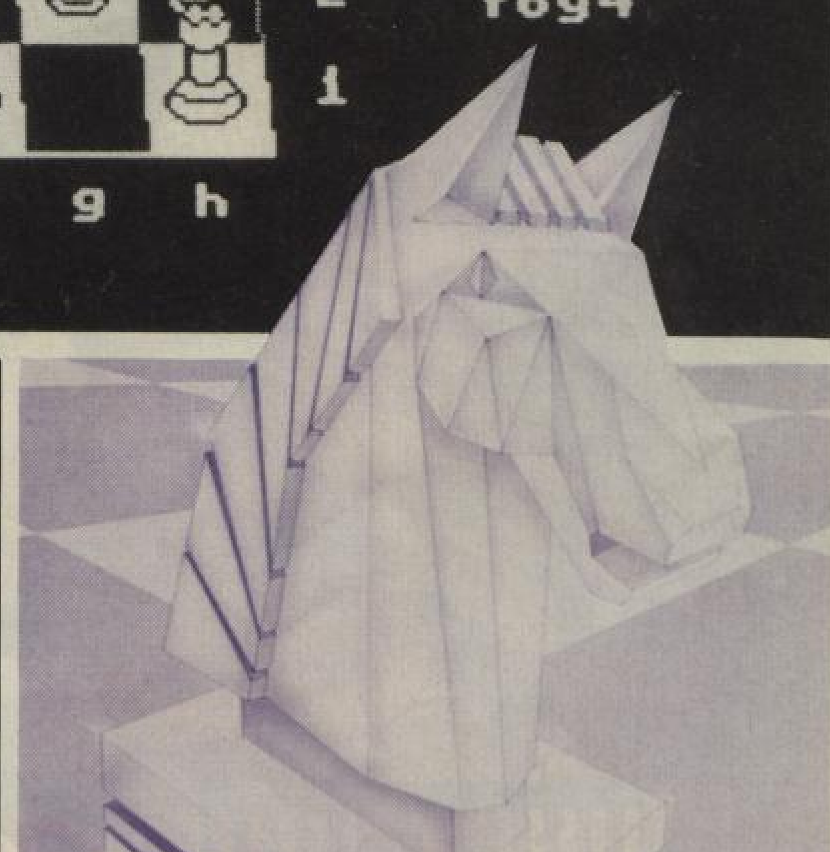
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COLOSSUS IV CHESS

CDS, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys





Quite a few issues ago (number three to be exact) we ran a feature called *The Great ZZAP! Chess Playoff* where both *Colossus Chess 2.0* and *Mychess II* battled together. *Colossus* hammered *Mychess* on the advanced level games whilst on the low levels the opposite happened.

The latest version of this mighty chess program 'thinks' a lot faster than *2.0* and also has the added attraction of allowing play in very realistic and effective 3D, rather than the standard flat 'Sunday Times Chess puzzle' format.

Colossus comes with a large and informative manual which explains the general workings of the program along with all the options.

When you start a normal game, the first action is to set the level and decide whether you or the computer is going to take white. Moving a piece is done by using the cursor keys, joystick control or through keyboard entry. When cursor keys or joystick are used, simply move the board cursor onto the piece that you want to move, press fire then move the piece to its intended position and press fire again. With the keyboard, you can use the traditional algebraic notation (eg *b4-b6*). All moves are recorded for the taking of notes.

Colossus IV recognises all the usual rules of chess and also has a built in clock allowing you to play a tournament style game. You can set the clock so each player has a time limit for every move. There is a useful option which forces the computer to match the time taken for your moves.

The program also has a wealth of options allowing you to practise or set up games. You can 'back-step' during a game if you make a mistake and wish to make that move again. The program has a self-play mode, so you can have a game against yourself without computer interference.

I find it very difficult to get enthusiastic over a chess program, but this is a real exception. What with the incredibly effective 3D board and its wealth of options, *Colossus IV* is THE best chess implementation yet to hit the 64, and indeed possibly any home micro. The 'easy' levels offer a pretty good challenge, while harder levels require a grand master touch to get anywhere. If you want a chess program then look no further than this one.



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Update:
Location: Dyson Sphere solar system: Co-ordinates unknown. **Subjects:** Crash survivors from Starliner 'Arcadia'.
Objective: Return crash survivors to Earth.
Method: Find and activate alternate space vessel. **Result:** Invalid method: No vessel available.
Next: Cross fingers: Get lucky. . .

THE TERMINAL MAN

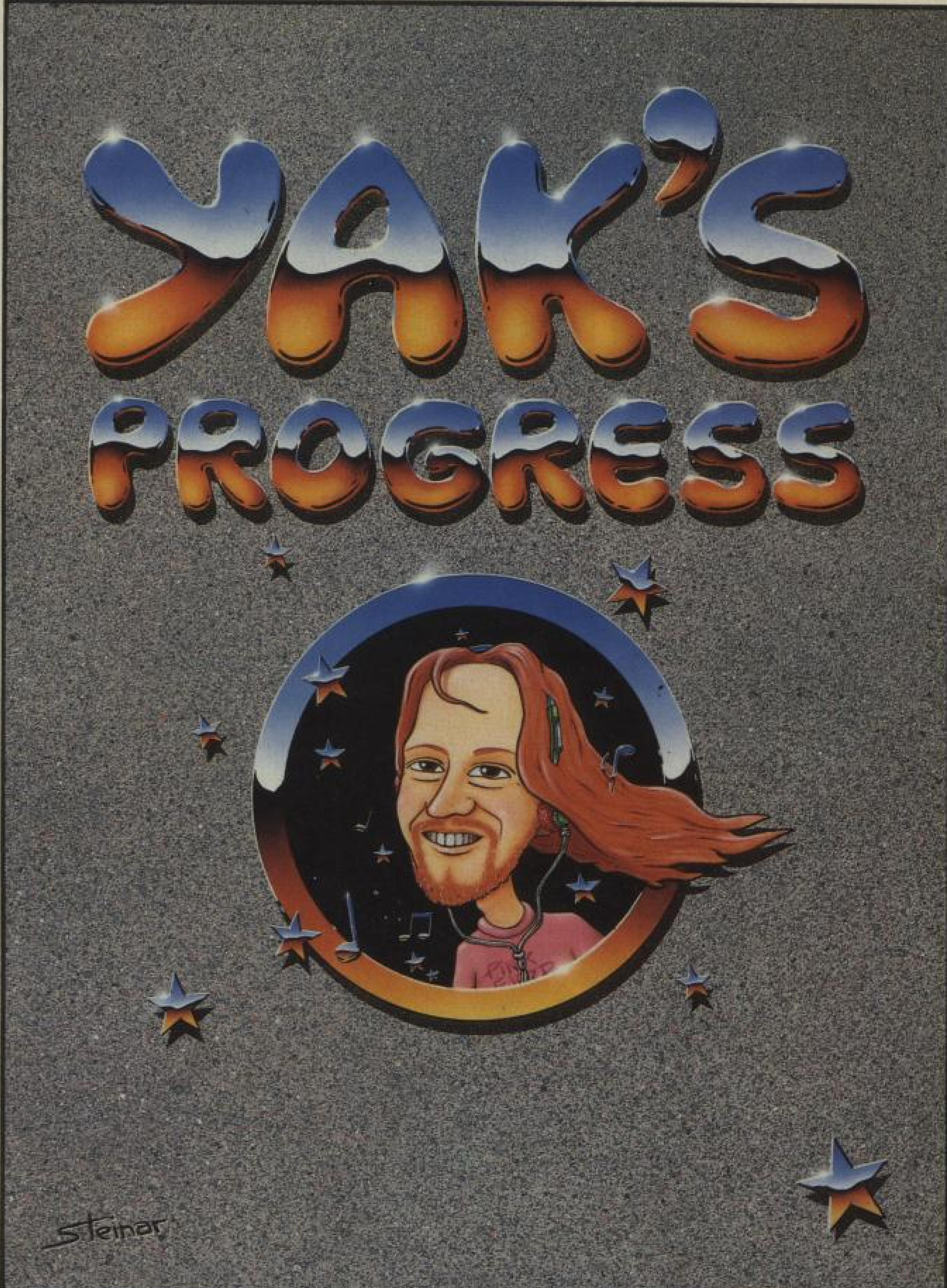




STORY BY KELVIN GOSNELL© DRAWN BY OLIVER FREY©



VERY WELL — EXPLAIN!
JUST KEEP 'EM TALKING, CONFUSE THEIR LEADER — YOU'LL FIND IT EASY...
ENTRY TO THE CITY IS FORBIDDEN WITHOUT PAPERS!
BUT WE COME SEEKING A HEALING MAN FOR OUR FRIEND THERE...
WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM — IS IT CATCHING...?
NO, NO. HE IS JUST SIMPLE IN THE HEAD — WANTS TO PLAY GAMES ALL DAY LONG. HUMOUR HIM — HE'S NOT VIOLENT...
WHICH ONE?
WHICH ONE WHAT?
WHICH ONE'S GOT THE COIN UNDER IT?
THAT ONE — SAW YOU PUT IT THERE!
WRONG!
'ERE — THAT'S A BIT CLEVER —
BET YOU CAN'T DO IT AGAIN!
I'LL BET THIS TRINKET AGAINST THAT BELT OF YOURS THAT I CAN —
MONEY! YOU DARE OFFER ME MONEY! ONLY THE FINEST BELT WILL DO — I HAVE THE FINEST COLLECTION OF BELTS IN THE LAND AND YOU OFFER ME MONEY!
WE HOPE TO GET HIS ECCENTRICITIES CURED SOON,
YOU'RE ON, IDIOT!
THIS REALLY IS QUITE AN INTERESTING GAME — I'LL BET YOU A GOLDEN VILG...
INDULGE THE POOR SOUL, GENERAL...
VERY WELL — MY MEN ARE ENJOYING THE SPECTACLE. CONTINUE...



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